THE

CULT of DIVINE POWER

"SAKTI SADHANA"

(KUNDALINI YOGA)

JADUNATH S1NHA

THE CULT OF DIVINE POWER

This valuable book elaborates of Saktism, the philosophy of Siva-Sakti, and the worship of Divine Mother, as based on Sakta Upanisads, Tantras and other authoritative works. Sakta Monism has a distinct and unique place in the History of Indian Philosophy and Religion. It is allied to Pratyabhijna school of Saivism of Kashmir and Advaita Vedanta.

Saktaism believes in Siva-Sakti, Siva, Absolute, and Sakti, Divine Power - laying stress on the latter as the creator, preser ver, destroyer of the world, and binder and liberator of the individual selves. Siva and Sakti are inseparable from each other, and an integral unity. Siva-Sakti is the Supreme Reality. Sakti is spiritual energy, dormant in matter as coiled power, more awakened in life, more manifest in mind or consciousness, more potent in super-consciousness. Sakti pervades the world, and sustains all individual selves, atoms of divine consciousness, limited by their, adjuncts. The world is created, maintained and dissolved by Sakti, and is real to an individual self until it is liberated. It is unreal to a liberated self.

In religion Saktism seeks for the complete transformation of human life into life divine.

Tantric meditation, Kundalinl-yoga, mental concentration at the centers of mystic consciousness and meditation on the Divine Power, Sakti, awakening of the coiled Divine Energy at the basic centre by exercises in breathing, making it pierce the six esoteric centers at the abdominal center, the navel center, the heart-centre, the throat-centre and the eye-brow center, and uniting it with the Absolute at the highest center at the top of the cerebrum, is a unique method in Saktism.

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PREFACE

This book gives the essentials of Saktism, the philosophy of Siva-Sakti, and the worship of Divine Mother, as based on Sakta Upanisads, Tantras and other authoritative works. Sakta Monism has a distinct and unique place in the History of Indian Philosophy and Religion. It is allied to Pratyabhijna school of Saivism of Kashmir and Advaita Vedanta.

Saktaism believes in Siva-Sakti, Siva, Absolute, and Sakti, Divine Power - laying stress on the latter as the creator, preserver, destroyer of the world, and binder and liberator of the individual selves. Siva and Sakti are inseparable from each other, and an intregal unity. They are not two entities. Siva-Sakti is the Supreme Reality. Sakti is not a phenomenal appearance, but ontological reality. Sakti is spiritual energy, dormant in matter as coiled power, more awakened in life, more manifest in mind or consciousness, more potent in superconsciousness. Sakti pervades the world, and sustains all individual selves, atoms of divine consciousness, limited by their, adjuncts. The world is created, maintained and dissolved by Sakti, and is real to an individual self until it is liberated. It is unreal to a liberated self.

In religion Saktism seeks for the complete transformation of human life into life divine. It is not exclusive but all-embracing. It seeks to harmonise works with knowledge, knowledge with devotion, and wordly life of enjoyment (pravrti) with ascetic life of detachment or renunciation (nivrti). It steers a middle course between gross hedonism and pure asceticism and other-wordly holiness. It seeks to harmonise individualism with humanism. It aims at divinization of human life.

Tantric meditation, Kundaliniyoga, mental concentration at the centres of mystic consciousness and meditation on the Divine power, Sakti, awakening of the coiled Divine Energy at the basic centrc by exercises in breathing, making it pierce the six esoteric contres at the abdominal centre, the navel centre, the heart-centre, the throat-centre and the eye-brow centre, and uniting it with the Absolute at the highest centre at the top of the cerebrum, is a unique method in Saktism. It is mentioned in an ancient Upanisad (Tait. Up., vi, 1. SB.) The *Bhagavad Gita* referes to the centres of mystic consciousness (BG., viii. 12-13.) The present author has written on 'Kundalini Yoga in Advaita Vedanta' in the *Chakra*, a Journal Of Tantra and Yoga (New Delhi), Vol, IV, 1972. It was reprinted in *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. Ill, (pp. 361-62.)

Saktism is as old as the Vedas. It is found in the *Devisukta* of the Rg Veda. Worship of gods and goddesses accompanied by drinking the intoxicating juice of a plant called *Soma* and sacrifice of, animals prevailed in Vedic times. Vedic warriors were not world-negating ascetics but world-affirming conquerors of black non-Aryans, enjoyed their lives and extended their kingdoms. Saktism, a cult of world-affirmation, continues this ancient tradition, sublimates and purifies it.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to Shiva Chandra Vidyarnava, the famous author of *Tantratattva* (Bengali) and Sir John Woodroffe, his eminent disciple, who edited many Sakta Tantras in Sanskrit and translated them in into English. Their works helped me in writing this book.

39, S. R. Das Road,
Calcutta-26. JADUNATH SINHA
14th April, 1977.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AP. Up. Annapurna Up. (N.S.P.)
BSSV - Bhatta Bhaskara's com. on SS. (K.S.T.S.)
AR - UK. Adbhuta Ramayana, Uttara Kanda.
BHS - Bhaktisandarbha (C.U.). 1960.
Br. - Bhuvanesvara Tantra.
BG. - Bhagavad Gita.
Bhag. - Bhagavata (Gita Press), Gorakhpur.
CCA. - Chaitanyacharitamtta (Bengali) (Krsnadasa Kaviraja).
BS - Bhagavatsandarbha (Jiva Gosvami) edited by Shyam Lal Goavami.
Ch S.S. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Varanasi.
CHI. - -Cultural Heritage of India, Calcutta, 1956.
C.V. - Chidvalli (com. on KKV.)
DBU. - Dhyanabindu Up. (N.S.P.).
DB. - Devi Bhagavata (Bareilly, 1968.)
D.G. - Devi Gita, Poona, 1915.
D.U. - Devi Upanisad.
IPEW. - Indian Psychology. Emotion & Will (Jadunath Sinha), S.P.H. (1961).
G.T. - Gandarbha Tantra.
GT. - Gems from Tantra (M. P. Pandit).
HBRS. - Haribhaktirasamrtasindbu (Rupa Gosvami). (Varanasi).
HIP. - History of Indian Philosophy. (Jadunath Sinha), S.P.H
KDT. - Kamadhenu Tantra.
KKV. - Kamakalavilasa.

KNT. - Kularnava Tantra.

K.S.T.S - Kasmir Sanskrit Text Series.

MBh. - Mahabharata.

MB. Up. - Mandala Brahmana Upanisad.

MMT. - Mundamala Tantra.

MNT - Mahanirvana Tantra.

MNTL - Introduction, MNT. (Sir John Woodroffe).

MP. - Markandeya Purana.

NB - Nadabindu.

Up. - Upanisad (N.S.P.)

N.S.P. - Nirnay Sagar Press, Bombay.

NT. - Niruttra Tantra.

NST. - Nrsirhhatapanl.

PB. Up. Pasupatabrahma Up.

PD. - Padarthasara (com. on ST.)
(Raghavendra Bhatta) Varanasi, 1934.

PH. - Pratyabhijnahrdaya (Ksemaraja) (edited by Jaidev Singh).

PK. - Pratyabhijnakarika.

PKV - Pratybhijnakarikavrtti (Utpladeva), K.S.T.S., 1921.

PS. - Prayogasara.

PTTD. - Paratrisikatparyadipika (Somananda) K.S.T.S., 1947.

PTTV. - Paratrimsikatattvavivarana (Abhinavagupta).

RPT. - Ramapurvatapani.

RY. - Rudra YAmala.

SBT. - Sarasvati Bhavan Text, Varanasi.

SD. - Sivadrsti (Somananda).

SK. - Spandakarika.

SL. Up. - Saubhagyn-Laksmi Up. (N.S.P.).

SS. - Sivasutra (Vasugupta)(K.S.T.S.)

SS. - Svacchanda-samgraha.

SRU. - Sarasvati rahasya.

ST. - Svacchanda Tantra.
ST. - Saradatilaka (Varanasi, 1934.)
SSV - Sivasutravartika (Varadaraja), K.S.T.S. 1925,
SSV. - („ Bhatta Bhaskara), („ 1970)
S.P.H. - Sinha Publishing, House, Calcutta-26.
STTS. - Sattrimsattattvasandoha (K.S.T.S.).
SAT - Saktanandatarangini.
SB. - Samkarabhasya.
Svet. - Up. Svetasvatara Up.
Tait. Up. - Taittiriya Up.
T.S. - Tantrasara (Kraiananda), Ch. S.S. No. 491.
TS. Up. - Tarasara Up. (N.S.P.)
TVSD. - Tantrik Vanmayamen Saktadrsti (Hindi) (Gopinatha)
TT. Up. - Tripuratapini Up.
TT. - Tantratattva (Bengali) (Shiva Chandra Vidyamava) Bengali year, 1380.
VST. - Visvesvara Tantra.
Var. Up. - Varaha Upanisad.
VS. - Vayaviya samhita.
TSSV - Sivasutravatrtika (Varadaraj), (K.S.T.S.)
YH. - Yogini today a (S.B.T.), 1963.
YHD - Yoginihrdayadipika. (")
YHS. - Yoginihrdayasetubandbe (S.B.T.)
YKU. - Yogakundali Up. (N.S.P.)
YS.Up - Yogasikha Up. (N.S.P.)
YSU. - Yogasikha Up. (N.S.P.)
YCU. - Yogacudamani Up.
YHT. - Yoginihrdaya Tantra.

CHAPTER I

SAKTISM

It is a unique type of spiritual monism, which regards Siva-Sakti as the Supreme Reality. Siva is one universal consciousness endowed with Sakti, power of will, power of knowledge, and power of action. The Advaita Vedanta regards the Brahman as the only ontological Reality, and considers It to be one Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Being is Consciousness. Consciousness is Being. Consciousness is Bliss. Bliss is Consciousness. Being, Consciousness, and Bliss constitute the essence of the Brahman. Power is maya, which is neither real, nor unreal, nor both, nor neither. The Brahman is devoid of power. But Saktism holds Siva-Sakti to be the Ultimate Reality. Siva is endowed with one universal Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Power (Sakti). Sakti is Divine Power. Siva is never devoid of power. Sakti is never devoid of Siva. Pratyabhijna Saivism lays greater stress on Siva in the nature of Illumination (prakasa). Saktism lays greater stress on Sakti, Divine Power, in the nature of ' I' - consciousness (vimarsa) and 'this' - consciousness (paramarsa). (NT., TT., p. 28) Both Pratyabhijna Saivism and later Saktism consider Sakti to be in the nature of vimarsa and paramarsa. The Devi Gita makes Sakti the creatrix of Brahma, Visnu, and Siva. Somananda (900 A.D.) a Saiva of Pratyabhijna school, mentions five powers of Siva, power of consciousness (cit), power of bliss (ananda), power of will (iccha), power of knowledge (jnana), and power of action (kriya). (SD., i, 3-4). They are, at first, not differentiated from one another. From the philosophical standpoint the concept of Siva-Sakti is better than the Brahman of the Advaita Vedanta.

Somananda considers all as real and in the nature of Siva. Saktism, on the other hand, considers all to be real and in the nature of Sakti. (3 SD., 1, 46. Ibid, iii, 20). The universe is the unfoldment of Sakti Divine Power, and as such real. Sakti contains in Herself the thirtysix principles (tattva) unfolded in the universe. The world is real as an unfoldment of Sakti. The individual souls are atomic and many, because Siva is contracted by five limiting agents - kala, niyati, kala, raga, and vidya. (DD, Vol. II p. 352). Pratyabhijna Saivism also believes in these five contractors of Siva, which make individual souls atomic and endowed with limited knowledge and power, and subject to merits and demerits, and transmigration. The Advaita Vedanta regards Isvara as a reflection of the Brahman in maya, cosmic nescience, which is neither real nor unreal, nor both, nor neither, or as Brahman limited by maya, and, consequently, a phenomenal appearance. But Saktism regards Goddess, Sakti, Devi, as ontologically real power of Siva. Siva is inseparable from Sakti. Sakti is inseparable from Siva. These are inseparable aspects of the Reality, interpenetrating each other, and forming one Integral Reality. They are One in two or two in One. Both Pratyabhijna Saivism and Saktism believe in the inseparability of Siva and Sakti. Siva and Sakti are inseparable from each other. Siva is Siva united with Sakti. Sakti is Sakti as united with Siva. (N.T.) Saktism does not consider Sakti to be a phenomenal appearance of Siva. (SD., vi, 1) (NT., TT., p. 112). Though the *Devi Gita* considers Isvara to be a reflection of the Brahman in maya, it considers Sakti to be ontologically real and adorable, and inculcates mental worship of Her as non-different from the worshipper's individual soul. The Advaita Vedanta regards an individual self as a reflection of the Brahman in primal nescience (avidya), an effect or modification of maya, and, consequently, ontologically unreal and false. Though the *Devi Gita* also considers an individual self as a reflection of the Barahman in avidya, individual nescience, Saktism considers it to be real and atomic because it is Siva limited by five

contractors. It belives in a jiva's power of realizing its identity with Sakti by mental worship of Her with supreme, unconditioned devotion devoid of sattva, rajas and tamas as non-different from a worshipper's finite self. It prescribes eightfold yoga, breath-control, meditation, trance, intuitive knowledge of Sakti as the supreme means of realizing Her. The Advaita Vedanta believes in knowledge as the only means of realizing Identity-consciousness. Saktism harmonizes works with knowledge and devotion, enjoyment with detachment, a householder's life with an ascetic life. The Advaita Vedanta insists on world-negation and asceticism. But Saktism inculcates harmonization of worldly life with divinization of human life.

Saktism regards the world as permeated by Goddess with Her power. She is in the nature of the world, yet she rules over the world, and maintains it. She is the ground of the world, and adored by gods and human souls. (Chandi., 4, 3. Ibid., 11, 30.) 'This world is filled with Divine Mother. All women are different forms of Divine Mother.' (Ibid., 11,6.) She is transcendent and immanent, formless and formed, unmanifest and manifest. (DB., Vol. I, pp. 114-15) She is really neither male, nor female, nor neuter because She is bodiless and sexless. She is one Brahman without a second. Yet she assumes different forms in time. (Ibid., Vol. I, p. 151) She is eternal power of maya expressed in the creative sport. She is Siva's eternal mayasakti, that is real. (DB., Vol. I. p. 384.) Sarhkara, Advaita Vedantist, regards it as ontologically unreal, but regards it as an undefinable and inexplicable pseudo-reality. It is neither real as Brahman nor unreal, like a hare's horn. It has phenomenal, relative, empirical reality. So the Sakta concept of maya is different from Sarhkara's view. Saktism regards maya as real, because it is one of the thirty six principle (tattva). The world is the unfoldment of Siva's mayasakti. Goddess is known as Mahamaya among gods and human souls, that worship Her. (Ibid., Vol. I, p. 442.) Mahamaya is identical with Mahavidya. (Chandi., 1, 72.) She is the creative power of Siva and grantor of the liberating

knowledge. She is the life principle (cetana), consciousness (citi), intelligence (buddhi), moral sense (lajja), faith in God (Sraddha) and divine power (Sakti) in human beings. (Ibid., 5, 19, 22, 34,;46, 52, 79 & 34.) All goddesses and all women are parts of Devi's parts. Maya, prakrti, and individual souls (jiva) are principles (tattva) comprised in Sakti, and therefore real. 'All men are forms of Siva; all women are forms of Sakti' (Tararahasya). So jivas are real. She binds and liberates them. So bondage and literation are real. (TT., 54.) Such lofty and exalted concepts of man and woman are not found elsewhere in the scriptures of world religions. Divine Mother is supreme power or nature of Supreme Self. (MNT., TT, p. 101) The world is created by Her out of Her power. So it is real. Devi is subtle and gross, unmanifest and manifest, formless and formed, transcendent and immanent, one and manifold. (MNT., 4, 15.) The world is in the nature of Siva-Sakti. It is not a false phenomenal appearance as Sankara thinks. Though it is full of non-eternal diverse things, Devi exists in all individual souls as the infinite Light of consciousness. (KNT., DB, TT., p. 175.) The subtle, unmanifest prakrti is the cause of the gross, manifest world. The cause and the effect are identical in their essence, according to Saktism, Both are real. The cause is the subtle essence of the effect, which is its manifestation or unfoldment. (KKV, p. 28.) According to Samkara (780-820 A.D.) Brahman is the only Reality, and cause and effect are phenomenal appearances. From the ontological standpoint both are false. Vasugupta, a Saiva of Pratyabhijna Saivism (800 A.D.) also, regards the world as an unfoldment of Siva's own powers. (SS., 3, 30.) The ubiquitous Lord, Siva, is manifested in the world in the form of the world, and is not manifested in the form of the Infinite Self, Atman. This is Bhatta Bhaskara's interpretation. (SSV., 3, 30.) The world is real according to Pratyabhijna Saivism also. The Spanda school of Saivism also regards the creation of the world as an unfoldment or evolution of Siva's circle of powers, and its dissolution as enfoldment or involution of His powers. (SK., i, 1.) Spanda

Saivism regards Siva as the Infinite Knower full of pure consciousness, and Sakti as manifested in the form of knowledge and known objects. (SK., 1, 18.) The knower is the essense of acts of knowledge and known objects, because without a knower there can be neither knowledge nor the known. Similarly, Siva is the Infinite Enjoyer, while acts of enjoyment and objects of enjoyment are mutable and perishable. (SK., 11, 29.) They do not exist without an Enjoyer. Likewise, Siva is the Infinite Agent or Doer, while the acts of doing and the objects of action are mutable and perishable. They do not exist without an Agent. (SK., 1, 14. SK., ii, 29.) Utpaldeva (1000 A.D.), a Saiva of Pratyabhijna school, regards Siva as the Infinite Knower, and an individual self as a finite Knower. (Ibid., 16.) An individual self is limited by prana and other vital forces and the like. But the Supreme Self is not limited. Free-agency characterizes lordship of Siva. (Ibid., 23.) But according to Samkara, the Brahman is not the Infinite Knower. Enjoyer and Agent, but Infinite Knowledge. The knower and the known are phenomenal appearances due to avidya, primal nescience. According to Saktism, Sakti, Divine Power, is the essence of knower, knowledge and the known, and inseparable from Siva. (KKV., 13-14.) Siva is the nature of Illumination; and Sakti is in the nature of T-consciousness. Prakasa is the essence of Siva. Vimarsa is the essence of Sakti. (KKV., V., 17).

This is the view of Pratyabhijna Saivism also. Utpaladeva (1000 A.D.) says, 'The power of Siva is manifested as if She were the Atman, and not in the form of 'this'. But T-consciousness, though in the nature of illumination, is manifested in the form of speech. (PK., i, 51.; i, 53). Illumination in the nature of manifestation is known as a finite Knower because it knows an object as 'this' as distinguished from T. The world of objects is manifested by Siva in the nature of illumination. He projects the world at His will outside Him without any material, like a yogin. (PK., i, 38). But His power of will is His Sakti, that cannot exist without Him. (Ibid., i, 41.) His illumination is

coloured *by* external objects, and manifests them. The objects are projected outside Him by His power of will. Sakti is power of will in the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa). (Ibid., i, 42.) Power; of consciousness in the nature of 'I'-consciousness is unfolded naturally as super subtle speech (paravak). (Ibid., i, 44.) Saktism also holds that Sakti in the nature of T-consciousness is unfolded as different grades of speech - paravak, pasysnti, madhyama and vaikhari. Sakti contains all thirtysix principles in Herself, and gradually unfolds them, and again withdraws; them at the time of dissolution. 'Though she is formless, yet She assumes many forms with Her real power of maya. She is the creator, maintainer, and destroyer of the world, though She is devoid of origin. (M.N.T, TT., 113) 'She permeates the world as infinite power of consciousness.' 'She is the Supreme Power, entirely free, and exists in all created beings as the dormant ultimate supreme knowledge. (TT, p. 23) There is none to impose His injunctions and prohibitions on Her. (DB., TT, 133) Pratyabhijna Saivism regards Siva as entirely free. Saktism regards Sakti as entirely free, Siva cannot impose His will on Her. In reality Sakti is power of Siva, and nondifferent from Her. Siva is incapable of doing anything without Sakti. Siva-Sakti is the Supreme Reality. So the question whether Sakti is subject to Siva's will or whether Siva is dead without Sakti does not arise. According to Saktism, 'Siva is the Supreme Purusa God; Sakti is the Supreme Goddess. Brahman is both Siva and Sakti united with each other.' (MP, TT., p. 109). 'The forms of Brahman are imagined from aspirants good although Brahman is impartite, bodiless, and unknowledge by valid knowledge, and in the nature of infinite consciousness.' The different forms of Brahman are imagined for the sake of the aspirants' meditation and worship. 'Sakti is conceived as invested with all powers. Her body is conceived as full of all gods and goddesses. Though She is formless, She assumes many forms.' (MNT; TT., p. 109.) She is the Supreme Divine Power'. She is the Supreme Purusa devoid of sattva, rajas and tamas. She is the root prakrti,

unmanifest and undifferentiated, nondifferent from supreme consciousness. She is unfolded into the world. She remains after dissolution; the world is dissolved in Her. She remains as the seed of the thirtysix principles. (DB., Vol. II, p. 224). She is worshipped both as devoid of gunas and as invested with gunas. She is the grantor of both exaltation and liberation. (DB., Vol. I, p. 115.) The Brahman devoid of attributes is the grantor of liberation alone in the form of Identity-consciousness, according to Advaita Vedantism. God invested with attributes - omnicience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and the like is imagined by avidya, and is a phenomenal appearance. But Goddess is real according to Saktism. Her grace is real. Supreme devotion evokes Her grace, and She bestows libration on Her devotee. (Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 210-11.) Brahmanas, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, men and women, all are eligible for the cult of Sakti, worship of Divine Mother. (Ibid., p.306.) Mahamaya resides in all human beings as their Supreme Self. She binds them to transmigration and liberates them from bondage, (ibid., p.443.) Human souls under the influence of Her power of maya are subject to bondage and liberation. She dwells in them all as the power of infinite consciousness. (DB., Vol. I, p. 444.) She is the omnicient Ruler of all, immutable and imperishable. She assumes the form of letters (aksara). She is full, of seeds of mantras. She is the Supreme Goddess wearing garland of letters (matrka). (DB., Vol. I, p. 494; Ibid., p. 130; DB., Vol. II, p. 461.) Mantras composed of letters constitute Her form. They embody infinite consciousness (mahavidya). Goddess is manifested by mantras. Different mantras manifest different Deities, aspects of Goddess. Mahavidya or Goddess is manifested by different mantras.

She resides as a coiled Divine Power, Kundalini, in the muladhara at the base of the spinal cord, flashing as a lightning. She is in the form of Sabdabrahma (Logos), full of all Vedas and all mantras. She is full of principles (tattva). She is the Mother of the three worlds (ST., TT., p. 318.). Saktism regards Kundalini as identical with Goddess, and inculcates Kundaliniyoga

for the attainment of liberation. Kundalini full of Sabdabrahma creates fifty letters. '(ST., i, 108-11). 'Kundalini is in the nature of Goddess, non-different from Her. (DG., iv, 33) She is the Divine Sakti, ubiquitous power coiled as Kundalini in the muladhara. (DV., Vol. II, pp. 438-39) She is in the nature of letters from a (अ) to Asa (क्ष) and destroys lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy. (Ibid., p. 442.) The awakening of Kundalini is common to Saktism and Saivism of Pratyabhijna school. Somananda (900 A. D.) identifies Kundalini with Goddess, and enjoins awakning Her by breath control and meditation on Her muladhara, making Her pierce the six chakras, and uniting Her with Parama Siva at the thousand-petalled lotus at the centre of the head. (Saktavijnana, K. S. T., 1947.) Abhinavagupta (1000 A. D.) refers to Kundalini in *Paratrimsikatattvavrana* (p. 196). Divine Sakti, Kundalini, exerts Her energy to create the world. (PTTV., p. 196n.)

Saktism agrees with Pratyabhijna, Saivism that Kundalini, coiled Divine Power, creates letters and things of the world. Words and objects are identical in their essence. This is the view of Bhartrhari also, who regards Sabdabrahma (Logos) as the ultimate Reality. He does not believe in Brahman, Siva, Sakti, or Kundalini. Pratyabhijna Saivism regards letters of Sanskrit alphabet from *ka* (क) to *ksa* (क्ष) as in the nature of Sakti, Divine Power. Matrka, a garland of letters, is created by Kundalini. All things are interpreted by letters. Matrka, is in the nature of Sabdabrahma. But the abode of Parama Siva transcends Sabdabrahma. Supreme Siva is beyond all letters, sounds and words, He is nontemporal. (PTTV., p. 194.) Abhinavagupta quotes from *Savachara*. 'All mantras are groups of letters and in the nature of letters; all letters are in the nature of Siva. (PTTV., p 235.) Saktism holds that the real nature of Siva or Siva-Sakti is known through mantras which embody pure knowledge (mahavidya). Sakti is mahavidya. Mahavidya can be acquired by the worship of Divine Mother with Her mantras. The Japa of them, meditation on Her through them, concentration

of mind on the petals and letters inscribed on them in the estoric centres (chakra) of the body, lead to the intuitive experience of Siva-Sakti. (Chandl. i, 72; DG., iv, 30-43) The essence of Goddess is power of consciousness (cit-sakti). The essence of Her mantras is pure consciousness. So She is manifested by Her mantras. Pratyabhijna Saivism also agrees with Saktism in this matter. Vasugupta (800 A.D.) says, 'Matrka is grounded in knowledge or consciousness' (SS., i, 4.) 'The secret of mantras is the sudden emergence or manifestation of the pure knowledge of Siva'. (Ibid., ii, 3.) Bhatta Bhaskara regards Matrka as Siva's power of action, which is self-manifest. (SSV. ii, 7.) Guru is the means of manifesting this Supreme Sakti of Siva through a mantra. (SS., ii, 6.) Bhatta Bhaskara says, 'Isvara, the Lord, is Mantras formed of letters, and is manifested by them'. (SSV., iii, 22.) Only temporal order of letters in mantras has to be discarded. Pratyabhijna Saivism regards a mantra as Siva, Supreme Consciousness. (SS., ii, 1.) Bhatta Bhaskara explains mantra or Siva as unconditioned and unlimited Knower. Again he explains a mantra as the essential nature of Siva's power of infinite consciousness. (SSV., ii, 2.) This view agrees with that of Saktism. Bhatta Bhaskara clearly expresses the Sakta view, when he says, 'Matrka is Siva's power of action, the root of all objects.' (SSV., ii, 7, 31-32.) Speech (vak) consisting of fifty letters is the root of all objects.' Saktism regards matrka consisting of fifty letters as created by Kundalini. (ST., 1, iii.) Sakta Tantras, describe different groups of letters as created by different goddesses, aspects of Goddess. Kundalini has to be aroused from her sleep, made to ascend through Susumna, pierce the six chakras, and be united with Parama Siva. Meditation on the Divine at the mystic centres and on the letters inscribed on the petals of the six lotuses reveals the true knowledge of Siva-Sakti. An individual self becomes Siva by destroying primal nescience, egoism, merits and demerits due to Goddess' mayasakti by means of Kundaliniyoga, according to Saktism. Similarly, Pratytibhijna Saivism holds that a body is destroyed by the

Knowledge of an individual self s identity with Siva or a mantra on the destruction of its merits and demerits and on the emergence of a divine body. (SSV., ii, 8.) Sakta Tantra says, a person is absorbed in Goddess, pure Atman, devoid of gunas and detached, by meditating on Her as identical with his individual self. (GT., xi, 1.) Worship your self always as identical with a Deity. One who does all actions as service to Goddess, eats food, and enjoys all objects of pleasure as given by Her, and experiences waking state, dream, and deep sleep, and trance as Divine Conciousness acquires godly disposition (divya bhava). (GT., xi, 7-9.) Chanting hymns to! Goddess, and repeated utterance of Her mantra are superior to external worship of Her image or diagram (yantra). Meditation on Her is superior to hymning Her and Japa of Her mantra. Experience of indentity of an individual self with Brahman or Siva-Sakti is the best (MNT.) An individual self is liberated, even in an embodied state, when it intuits its identity with Supreme Self, unbiquitous, perfect, non-dual, Being, Witness, transcending all phenomena. (Ibid., xiv, 21-22) It is bound by merits and demerits, when they are destroyed by the intuition of its identity with Siva-Sakti, it is liberated. (Ibid., xiv, 16; Ibid., xiv, 32.)

According to Saktism, an individual Self (jiva) is liberated, when it intuitively experiences its identity with Siva-Sakti even while it is in an embodied state. (MNT, xiv, 21-22) It regards the Brahman as Siva-Sakti. When the bonds are destroyed, a jiva becomes identical with Siva-Sakti. In its state of bondage it is not identical with Siva-Sakti, because it is limited by its limiting adjuncts and because it is tainted by its merits and demerits clue to avidya and egoism. Yoga consists in the union of an individual self with Supreme Self; worship of Sakti is done by a devotee; an intuiter of 'all is Brahman' neither worships nor practices yoga. (Ibid., xiv, 29.) The intuitive experience of the identity of an individual self with Siva-Sakti, firmly established in consciousness, is liberation. The *Mahanirvana Tantra* speaks of liberation as the intuitive experience of 'I am Brahman',

'Brahman is one Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss,' like Advaita Vedanta. One with such experience has neither merits nor demerits, neither rebirth nor transport to heaven. (Ibid., xiv, 31-32.) This Tantra states the Sakta view as identical with the Advaita Vedanta view. 'The self-knowing Atman, Supreme Self, is liberated. Knowledge is Atman, pure consciousness; the known object is Atman; the knower is Atman. One who knows this truth is the knower of Atman. Knowledge, the known, and the knower appear to be different under the influence of maya. But there is a difference between Saktism and Advaita Vedanta. The former regards Brahman as Siva-Sakti, one Being-Consciouseness-Will-Bliss-Power while the latter regards Brahman as one Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The former regards Sakti as real, and maya as an inferior power of Sakti while the latter regards maya as indefinable and inexplicable and yet as positive nescience, which has the power of veiling the nature of Brahman (avarana Sakti) and the power of projecting the manifold world-appearance (viksepa-sakti). The spiritual discipline incalculatcd by Saktism includes Kundaliniyoga. The earlier Advaita Vedanta is not acquainted with Kundaliniyoga though the *Prapanchasara Tantra* is ascribed to Sankara. The present author has shown elsewhere, that later Advaita Vedantists prectised kundaliniyoga (H.I.P. Vol. III.) Saktism regards Sakti as eternal, pure, impartite, non-dual, and transcending maya, and yet possessed of maya creating the universe, subjecting individual souls to its influence and liberating them from bondage to maya. (TT., p. 225.) Sakti (Devi) is the supreme power of Siva, Mother of all, invested with eternal knowledge and soverignty, eternal bliss, creator, maintainer, and destroyer of the universe, the form of the Brahman, and Saviour of the bound souls. (TT, p. 226.) She is inconceivable, subtler than the subtle, original Divine Power of Siva, transcending all effects of prakrti. (MNT, xiii.) Maya and prakrti are real principles (tattva) comprised in Sakti. Sakti, Divine Mother, is the form of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, formless and invested with forms. She assumes for the good of Her devotees. (NR., TT., p. 264.)

Prakrti is modified into effects in the form of worldly things. Effects are merged in prakrti in dissolution. Prakrti and its effects are real, because they are positive entities (tattva). (NT., TT. p. 265.) Hence Saktism is different from the Advaita Vedanta of Samkara, although both are types of idealistic monism.

Saktism regards creation of the world as real and dissolution of it as real. Creation is unfoldment of Siva's power of creative will. Dissolution is involution or enfoldment of Siva's power of creative will. Both are real. Pratyabhijna Saivism also regards creation of the world as unfoldment of the powers of Siva. Vasugupta says, 'The world is unfoldment of the power of Siva.' (SS., iii, 31.) Bhatta Bhaskara says: 'Siva, Atman of the nature of consciousness, creates, maintains, and dissolves the world by His Will. (SSV., iii, 31.) Yet Vasugupta avers, the world is dissolved when an individual self knows the powers of Siva to be identical with Him, and knows itself to be identical with Siva-Sakti. When an individual self awakens Kundalini and makes her pierce the six estoric centres, and unite with Parama Siva permanently, it is liberated, and the world ceases to exist for the liberated soul. The world no longer attracts it, and subjects it to its influence. The Advaita Vedantist also holds that a person released in embodied life is no longer affected by the world. It is neither bound nor liberated, neither goes to heaven nor is reborn. Saktism also holds the same view. For a soul released while alive there is neither merit nor demerit, neither heaven nor rebirth it is always liberated; it knows all as Brahman or Siva-Sakti. (MNT., xiv, 32-33.) A soul released in embodied does not destroy the world.

CHAPTER II

SlVA

Laksmana Desikendra quotes from authoritative Sakta works about the nature of Siva. Siva is transcendent of gunas - sattva, rajas and tamas (nirguna), and immanent in them (saguna). As transcendent He is devoid of relation to the gunas of prakriti. 'He is eternal, ubiquitous, subtle, and devoid of modification, and pain. He is eternal bliss and witness (saksin)' (PS). He is inactive, calm, unborn, imperishable, unaging, immortal, unmanifest, unknowable, immovable, stable, and transcendent of the gunas. He is in the nature of truth, knowledge and bliss, self-aware, eternal, stainless, partless, and incomprehensible by the intellect (buddhi), He is the Supreme Brahman residing in the heart' (MBh,). 'Siva, the Lord of all, with His Divine Power (Sakti) is non-different from Brahma, Visnu, and Rudra, - the creater, preserver, and destroyer. He pervades the universe, and assumes the forms of different objects through His Sakti' (ST. I, 6; XD., p. 9). Siva devoid of Sakti cannot create, preserve, and destroy the universe. 'Sakti, Supreme Divine Power, non-different from Siva, issued from Him, and created the universe.' (VS.) Sakti contained the seed of all created beings. Siva is by nature transcendent of the gunas and immanent in them in the sense of being invested with divine power (Sakti) according to Saktism. The Advaita Vedanta wrongly holds that the unqualified and indeterminate Brahman becomes qualified and determinate being associated with cosmic nescience (maya). Maya is unreal for idealistic monism. But Divine Power is real. Siva is the

Absolute and in the nature of manifestation (prakasa) only. He cannot create the universe without His Power (Sakti) in the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa) and creative bliss.

Parama Siva is the transcendent, self-revealing, infinite, undifferntiated, consciousness (cit). Sakti, Divine Power, is His aspect inseparable and non-different from Him. He is the quiescent static, impersonal or suprapersonal, Absolute. But Sakti is the personal, active, dynamic, God invested with ' I '-consciousness, knowledge, will and action as essential, attributes and powers. Sakti is feminine in Sanskrit, and is so called Divine Mother. The universe is the expression of Her free will. Siva is indifferent to the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe. Sakti creates, maintains and dissolves it. She is the cause of bondage and liberation of the individual souls (jivatman). She projects the universe of phenomenal apperances through maya, and entangles the individual souls in embodied life by veiling their spiritual nature by avidya or ignorance. Parama Siva is called 'Sunya', because He transcends all phenomenal appearances, and because He is unqualified and predicateless. Bindu, dynamic consciousness, was created out of static universal consciousness - Parama Siva. Siva and Sakti are not distinguished from each other in Bindu. Point (bindu) is their equilibrium. The subtle sounds (Sabda) and physical objects (artha) were created by Bindu, that was the ultimate self-luminous reality with the wave of its manifestation. Siva and Sakti are not two supreme realities, but are the two aspects of the Supreme Reality - the Brahman. They are not two Deities but one Divine Being, impersonal-personal, static-dynamic, transcendent-immanent (YH., 1, 9-11, pp. 15-25).

Siva is the non-spatial, non-temporal, transcendent, indescribable, incomprehensible, formless, partless, indeterminate, non-dual, Supreme Reality of the nature of infinite bliss. He is supremely beautiful. He is the supreme light of consciousness residing in the hearts of all creatures as their Supreme Self (paramatman), and transcends their waking state, dream, deep

sleep, and trance (turiya). He is self-manifest and self-aware (YH, YHD., 1, 35, 49-50).

Purnananda and Natanananda's account of Siva closely resembles that of Pratyabhijna Saivism. 'The Brahman is in the nature of Siva and Sakti. Siva is Supreme Lord; Sakti is Supreme Goddess. Siva and Sakti are inseparable from each other. Siva endowed with Sakti is able to perform His acts. Sakti abiding in Siva is able to create, maintain, destroy the world, and bind, and liberate the souls. Siva or Rama is the inconceivable, eternal consciousness (cit), Witness of all, creator, maintainer, and destroyer of all worlds, when He is endowed with Sita or Sakti. Siva is the onnipotent, subtle, supreme, eternal Brahman. (AP, UK.) Siva is the subtle partless, omnipresent imperishable, all-pervasive, unborn, infinite consciousness. He is the ocean of compassion, and initiates a disciple through the medium of a human Master (Guru), and grants exaltation and liberation to him. (KT.) Siva is in the nature of consciousness and bliss. He manifests the world without any external material at His free will like a yogin. The world exists in His power in His heart as a seed. The Lord paints the picture of the world in His will, as the canvas, and delights in it. Sakti residing in His heart differentiates names and forms or objects at Her playful will. Siva is illumination (prakasa) of the world. He is self-luminous or self-aware and illumines or knows the world. His consciousness is eternal, and never lapses. He is omniscient and His consciousness is directed inward. He is perfect 'I'-consciousness (ahanta) and 'this-consciousness' (idanta) because He is full of reflection (vimarsa). Reflection involves not only ' I'-consciousness but also 'this-consciousness' (paramarsa). (KKV. C. V., 1.) Siva presiding over the principles (tattva) is the chief cause, efficient cause, of all entities. Sakti is their material cause. (ST., KKV, CV. i, p. 8.) She is the transparent mirror in the nature of Siva's 'I'-consciousness and 'this-consciousness', the seed of the world of sentient beings and insentient things, in which He is reflected. (KKV., 2.) When the rays of the sun are reflected on a mirror,

the reflection of the sun appears to be luminous point. When the rays of Parama Siva are reflected in the mirror of Sakti, 'I'-consciousness, the Mahabindu appears on the wall of Siva's Sakti manifesting Herself. Vimarsa is the power of manifestation. She it the power of being manifested, (sphuratta), at a particular time, in a particular place. A sound is a particle of Sakti, T-conscoiusness (vimarsa), which is in the nature of a word, a mantra, and a letter. Siva is one whose illumination is eternal. His illumination is eternal consciousness 'I am one', I' am perfect 'I' (CV., KKV., 5.) Siva and Sakti interpenetrate each other, and create the world. Sakti is kala, letters, words, mantras, principles (tattva), and worlds. They are reflected in Sakti, Consciousness-Power of Siva. She is in the nature of nada, bindu, and kala. (Ibid., 7, p. 25.)

SAKTI

The *Rg Veda* describes the nature of Goddess, Devi, in the following manner. Devi says: 'I am the Lady, ruler of the worlds, pestower of wealth on my devotees. I have seen the Supreme Self in my nature, Whom all are enjoined to worship. I am the Supreme Deity to Whom oblations should be offered to a sacrificial fire. I reside in the essence of the universe. I make Atman enter into all individual souls. All direct their acts of devotion to Me. (Devi Sukta, 3.) I make all sentient beings eat food, see things, breathe and live, and hear sounds. Those who do not know Me as the Inner Controller of all live in misery. (Ibid., 4.) I being worshipped by gods and men make some fierce and strong, some venerable, some sages, some extremely intelligent at my free will. (Ibid., 5.) I created the earth and heaven, and entered into them. I reside in them as their Inner Controller. (Ibid., 6.) I created the sky as Father, created the waters in the seas as Mother, pervade all worlds as their Inner Supreme Self, and manifest them with my effulgent body. (Ibid., 7.) I have created all worlds at my will without being urged by any higher Being, and dwell within them. I permeate the earth and heaven,

and all created entities with my greatness and dwell in them as eternal and infinite consciousness.' (Ibid., 8.) Thus the *Rg Veda* has a clear conception of the Divine as a Goddess.

The Chandogya Upanisad says: 'O gentle one! there was being alone before creation, one without a second.' (Chand. Up., vi, 2,1.) Evidently, Being is Brahman (neuter). 'That (tat) willed: I shall become many. That created light. *Tat* (neuter) means Brahman. (Ibid., vi, *2,* 2.) Then the Upanisad describes the Divine as a female Deity. 'This female Deity (yam devata) willed: I shall interpenetrate the three seeds as individual souls (jiva) and create names and forms, concrte things'. (Ibid., vi, 3, 2.) The same Supreme Reality, Brahman, is described as a female Deity, Goddess (devata). The *Svetasvatara Upanisad* is a Saiva Upanisad. It says: 'One Lord rules over all worlds with His ruling powers'. (Svet. Up., iii, 1.) These are Saktis of Siva. 'Siva is endowed with the power of maya. 'Maya is Siva's power.' Siva creates the world with the power of maya. Maya is prakrti made of sattva; rajas and tamas.' (Ibid., iv, 9-10.) Siva rules over the world with ruling powers (Isani Sakti), which are powers of consciousness (cit-Sakti), according to Saktism. Maya and prakrti are real, principles (tattva) comprised in Sakti. Siva is the Lord of maya, and the invividual souls are subject to maya, and bondage. The *Svetasvatara Upanisad* and Saktism agree in this matter. The former recognizes the reality of three ontological realities - God, individual souls, and the world. They are distinct from one another, and are yet related to one another. The latter regards the individual souls (jiva) as limitations of Siva by raga, kala, vidya, and niyati, which are contractors, and the world as unfoldment of the power of Sakti. After creation and before dissolution the world is real. After dissolution the world is dissolved in Sakti and remains in a subtle state non-different from Sakti. Individual selves also remain in a subtle state non-different from Sakti until they are liberated.

The *Chandi* in *Markandeya Purana* describes Sakti, Goddess,

as eternal and yet assuming the form of the world and permeating all things. She is the creator, preserver, and dissolver of the world, and its ruler. She is the Supreme Mother. She is the Mahamaya and Mahavidya. She infatuates all embodied individual souls with delusion, and binds them to transmigration. She liberates them from such bondage by giving them the saving knowledge. She is the great deluder, and the great liberator. She is the most lovable and beautiful. She is the Supreme Goddess ruling over superior and inferior beings. She is indewelling conscious, divine power in all subtle and gross things, (i, 48, 50-52, 57, 64, 67-72, 77-78.) She is the supreme, original prakrti, the unmanifest ground of all. She is the Supreme Knowledge (parama vidya) sought by the seekers of salvation purged of all taints. She is Sabdabrahma, the source of Rk, Sama and Yajuh, Durga, the boat to cross the ocean of transmigration with, grantor of exaltation and liberation. She desires the good of the denizens of heaven, earth, and hell, (iv; 7, 9-11, 15, 40.) She is the most terrible. She is Durga, and destroys all difficulties. She is the consort of Siva, auspicious Mother. (Viii, 9-10, 12.) She is the remover of distress of Her proteges. All branches of learning are Her different forms. All women are Her different manifestations. The whole world is full of the one Divine Mother. She is the grantor of heaven and liberation. She is the Highest Good, grantor of all boons, Refuge of all proteges and deliverer of the distressed. She is the eternal Divine Power creating, sustaining, and dissolving the world. She is the ground of sattva, rajas and tamas, and full of gunas. She is immanent in and transcendent to the world (xi, 3-7, 10-12.) She is in the nature of all, endowed with all powers, and the ruler of all. (xi, 24.) The *Devi Gita* describes Her true form as in the nature of pure consciousness devoid of any limiting condition (upadhi) and a substrate. She is Atman, Supreme Self, Wittnes to the Universe. (DG., 8; 44-45.)

The *Devi Gita* states the nature of Sakti in the following manner. Before creation of the world there was Sakti, Divine

Power, alone. She is Brahman, Atman, infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Atman is Supreme Self. She is indefinable incomprehensible by reason, unqualified by attributes, self-existent, self-luminous, and known as Sakti or Maya. She is ontologically real, and neither empirically real nor unreal, nor both, because empirical reality and unreality both are self-contradictory. She is the efficient cause of the world because of Her being of the nature of consciousness. She is the material cause of the world, because She is modified into the world. She is consciousness, and so is not manifested by any other being. If She were manifested by any other being, She would be insentient and material. Consciousness cannot be known as an object. If it were so, it would cease to be conscious. She is not manifested by Herself as an object, because it would involve infinite regress. If She were manifested by Herself, the latter would be manifested by some other entity, and so on to infinity. Further, the same entity cannot be a knower and a known object, because, it involves self-contradiction. So Sakti is self-luminous like a lighted lamp. She is the Witness (saksin) in the nature of consciousness. She is eternal, because consciousness never lapses in the waking state, dream, deep sleep and trance. The absence of consciousness is never experienced in these states. But sometimes the absence of objects is experienced in them. She is in the nature of bliss, and therefore the object of supreme love. There is no other real entity. So She is detached and unlimited. Knowledge is not an attribute of Atman. If it were an attribute, Atman would be insentient and material, because sometimes Atman would be without knowledge. An attribute sometimes exists in a substance, and sometimes does not exist in it. But knowledge always exists in Atman. So Atman is in the nature of knowledge, and can never be diverted of it. Atman is in the nature of being-knowledge-bliss, real, perfect, detached, and void of duality or plurality. (DG,. i,2-4, 8, 12-14, 16-21.) Sakti is described here as Brahman or Atman of the nature of infinite Being-Knowledge-Bliss as stated by Samkara. But Samkara

does not regard Brahman or Atman as Sakti, or Divine Power or Supreme Conscious Power. He regards Power as the Ignorance, neither real nor unreal nor both, but a phenomenal appearance. He regards cosmic nescience (maya) as inexplicable appearance. He considers Brahman or Atman to be static consciousness devoid of any power or activity. This is the difference between Sakti and Brahman or Atman. Atman, according to Saktism and Samkara, is Supreme Self as distinguished from an individual or empirical self (jiva).

The *Devi Gita* describes Sakti as supermundane Power stated to be the cause of all causes, when She is associated with maya, which is unmanifest and undifferentiated. Maya is not unconscious but of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, the abode of power of will, the power of knowledge, and the power of action, the source of all cosmic activities, the origin of the thirty six principles (tattva) (DG, i, 24-26.) Kundalini is a form of Sakti, Divine Power, in the human body, non-different from Her. Susumna called brahmanadi within the spinal cord is of the nature of Sakti, an embodiment of the nature of immortality. Kundalini, coiled Divine Power, flows from the susumna, is of the nature of Divine Mother and not different from Her. (Ibid., iv, 30 & 33.)

The *Devi Upanisad* describes Sakti as of the nature of Brahman. From Sakti prakrti and purusa were born. The world, Void, non-void, knowledge, and non-knowledge were born. She is the whole world, five elements, and non-elements, unborn prakrti and non-prakrti, knowledge and nescience. (DU., 1.) She is; sattva, rajas and tamas. She is one, assumes the form of the world, and is so called not-one. She is the matrix (matrka) of mantras and in the nature of knowledge in the words. She is the Witness of void among all voids. She is beyond knowledge. She is Supramental Consciousness. She is the Supreme Goddess. (Ibid., 10 & 17.)

The Adbhuta Ramayana describes Sita as an incarnation of Sakti in the nature of infinite pure consciousness. Sakti is the

eternal prakrti of the nature of sattva, rajas and tamas, and transcending the gunas. She is the saving knowledge (vidya) and the binding ignorance (avidya). She is the cause of all causes. She is the great coiled Divine Power *(Kundalini)* called Brahman permeating the whole world consisting of animate and inanimate things. The whole world is the manifestation of Her playful activity. There is no difference between Rama and Sita, though there is difference in their forms. Rama is the eternal consciousness, Witness of all, creator, maintainer, and destroyer of the world with the aid of Sita, Divine Power. She is Sakti abiding in Siva. She is the Supreme Divine Power, void of all forms and yet the abode of all forms. She is the pervasive either of consciousness. She is the supreme bliss and the grantor of bliss. She is the eternal, ubiquitous, subtle, Light of Consciousness, Supreme Brahman. (TT. pp. 170-71) Here Rama is regarded as an incarnation of Siva and Sita, an Incarnation of Sakti.

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* describes Sakti as the Consort of Siva, higher prakrti of the Supreme Self, that produces the entire world. She is the mother of all, Durga, Kali, Tara. She is in the nature of all powers. Her body is composed of gods. She is gross and subtle, manifest and unmanifest, formed and formless, assumes different forms in order to favour Her devotees. She is the Supreme Sakti endowed with all powers. Endowed with Her powers, Brahma creates the world, Visnu maintains it, and Siva destroys it. The *Kularnava Tantra* says, 'The unknowable, unprovable, partless and bodiless Brahman's different forms or bodies are conceived by the intellect for the good of the seekers of Divine Spirit'. (TT., p. 101.) *The Bhagavata* describes Durga as Divine Mother of all sentient beings. She permeates the world, and manifests it by Her rays of light. She is full of all gods, and a mass of infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Para Brahman is endowed with power and becomes full of Her power of maya. Six Sivas in the form of Bramha, Visnu, Rudra, and others play at six esoteric centres (cakra) as Sakti. The Supreme Divine Power in the nature of consciousness resides in the human body

AS vibration (parispanda). She resides as spiritual Light in human bodies (TT., pp. 172-74.) She is of the form of Being-Consciousness-Bliss, pure, full of knowledge, eternal, partless, ill-pervading, subtle, immaterial, painless, inaccessible to the yogins, and inexpressible. She created Purusa, and Brahma with the aid of rajas, Visnu with the aid of sattva, and Siva with the aid of tamas. She created a finite self (jiva) and deluded it with maya, and bound it to a circle of births and deaths. She resides in the body of a bound self as spiritual vibration (parispanda). It induces a jiva to acquire the saving knowledge of the Reality and to be liberated from transmigatory process. She is supreme knowledge (para vidya). (TT, pp. 178-79.) She is the cosmic nescience (visvamaya), and transcends maya, because She is eternal, pure, partless, non-phenomenal, non-dual, power of pure conscionsness. She is Supreme Divine Power (Sakti), Goddess, endowed with eternal sovereignty of the world of finite souls and things. She is full of eternal bliss, Saviour of bound souls from the sea of births and deaths and resides in their hearts as their Supreme Soul. An individual soul which destroys merits and demerits (papa) with the sword of knowedge and merges his mind in Divine Consciousness, is a true eater of meat. (KT., 5, 109. GT., p. 83.) Merits are due to virtuous actions. Demerits are due to vicious actions. These actions are respectively enjoyed and prohibited by social and customary laws Tor the maintenance of a social order. They are relative and hold true of a particular society at a particular time, in a particular place, under particular circumstances. What is considered good in one country is considered evil in another country. What is regarded as good in a country at one time is regarded as evil at another time. Siva-Sakti is beyond time, space, causality, and conditions. So the immediate experience of Siva-Sakti requires the transcendence of social and relative morality, and the realization of a soul's transcendent freedom in union with spaceless, timeless, causeless, transcendent Divine Spirit. The great saint-poet, Rama Prasada, asserts the same truth in a devotional song. The

Kamakalavilasa says, 'Sakti is the Primordial Energy in the nature of eternal and infinite bliss, and the seed of the universe of moving and unmoving things. She is the transparent mirror in which Siva experiences Himself. (KKV., 2.) This idea is found in Pratyabhijna Saivism also. The *Kubjika Tantra* describes Brahma, Visnu, and Rudra as incapable of creating, maintaining, and destroying the world devoid of the powers of creation, maintenance, and destruction. Brahmam, Sakti of Brahma, is the creator.' 'Vaisnavi,, Sakti of Visnu, is the maintainer; and Rudram, Sakti of Rudra, is the destroyer of the world. (TT., p. 230.) The *Saktamatachandrika* says, 'Brahma is Sakti, Visnu is Sakti, Siva is Sakti, all gods are Sakti. They are incapable of doing anything without Sakti, so Sakti is their source, and is superior to them.' Sakti is formless, and yet assumes forms for the good of Her devotees. She is pure Brahman, **a** mass of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Sometimes She assumes the form o**f** Divine Father, sometimes the form of Divine Mother, and sometimes the form of Brahman. That is sexless. But She is neither male, nor female, nor neuter. She assumes different forms for the good of Her devotees. *(Navaratnesvara.* TT., p. 264.) The *Brahmasamhita,* a religious book of the Vaisnavas, describes Rama as Destiny (niyati) that governs merits and demerits. Siva is the divine *Linga* with whom She sports. He is the eternal Light. She is the Divine *Yoni* of Siva (V, 1**2.**)

The cult of Sakti is as old as the Vedas, the "Devisukta" describes the nature of the Devi, Divine Mother, in the following manner. Devi is of the nature of existence-consciousness-bliss, and the ubiquitous, Supreme Self, and Goddess. She is the Sovereign of the universe, and resides in it as its ground. She is the Inner Controller of heaven, earth and hell, manifests them at Her will, and dwells in them as the immutable, neutral, infinite consciousness. She is the material cause of the universe and its elements. She makes an individual self (jivatman) enter a body, and makes it breathe, eat, see, as its Inner Controller. She creates e**mbo**d**ie**d souls, hi**gh and low**, gods and goddesses,

and gives them bondage and liberation, prosperity and adversity, heaven or hell, sustains and protects them, and instructs them in the highest knowledge of the Brahman. She is the receiver of all sacrifices (yajna) and worship (1 - 8).

The "Chandi," Markandeya Purana, gives the, following account of the nature of Devi. She is the Supreme Divine Mother, the ground of the universe, and its creator, maintainer and pestroyer. She is the abode of contradictory qualites. She is the most beautiful and the most terrific. She is the Supreme Knowledge (mahavidya) and the supreme maya or cosmic nescience (mahamaya) - inducer of ignorance (avidya) and delusion (moha), (the Supreme Goddess and the power of demons, the protector pf the virtuous persons and gods and the persecutor of the vicious persons and demons, the grantor of covetable boons and the giver of dreadful punishments, the cause of bondage and release. She generates delusion in a person, veils his knowledge of his real nature as an eternal spirit, and causes his attachment to his body and the like. She removes his delusion and ignorance, gives him real knowledge, and grants him release through Her grace. She is Durga - the boat to cross the impassable ocean of birth and death with. She is Laksmi - the goddess of prosperity. She is Sarasvati - the goddess of learning and the knowledge if the Sastras. She is possessed of inconceivable prowess and ommipotence and yet compassionate to Her devotees and cruel to their persecutors. She is gentle and grim, good and terrible, door of good and evil. She is the grantor of good prosperity, accomplishment (siddhi), and beautitude. She is dark because She assumes the form of cosmic nescience. She is smoky because She induces delusion in individual souls and entangles them in bondage. She assumes the form of Kali for the destruction of demons. She destroys the miseries of those who take refuge in Her. She is the refuge and support of the helpless and the supportless. She is fond of Her devotees and bestows Her grace on them who take refuge in Her. She is eternal, and yet appears on earth for the protection of godly persons (deva) and for the

persecution of the demoniac persons (asura). She is the well-wisher of all beings in the three worlds. She is the creator of essence (sattva), energy (rajas), and inertia (tamas), and the material cause of the universe. She is the creator of Brahma, Visnu, and Rudra, and the power that sustains all being and non-being. She is of the nature of subtle sounds, the ground of the Vedas - Rg, Sama and Yajus, and of the various arts and crafts which are the means of livelihood, and the destroyer of the miseries of the world. Her grace (krpa) is the real cause of release. (1, 48-52, 57-58, 63, 67-73, 77-80; iv, 7, 9-11, 16-17, 22, 40; v, 9-13, 116; xi, 3-12, 22-24, 29-31, 33-35; xiii, 2-5, 14).

The Sakta Tantras describe the nature of Sakti in the following manner. Supreme Sakti is Parama Siva's power of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa) full of supreme bliss and homogeneous with Him of the nature of manifestation (prakasa) (Cp. SD, i, 3-4; iii, 2.) The power of infinite consciousness (chitsakti) creates the world under the supervision of Him. Para Sakti, Supreme Divine Power, is non-different from Him, and is manifested in all processes of the world. Siva is like a lamp of the nature of manifestation. He knows Himself when He is reflected in His Sakti. Sakti, His power of 'I'-consciousness (ahanta), is like a ray. She is naturally formless and indeterminate. But when She assumes the form of the universe, She is differentiated as knowers, valid knowledge, means of valid knowledge, and objects of such knowledge. She contracts and limits Herself, and Siva also contracts and limits Himself. Creation is limitation of Siva-Sakti of the nature of the powers of knowledge, will and action. The power of T -consciousness is modified into the world consisting of thirty six principles (tattva). Siva is the substratum of Her manifestation as the world, which is non-different from Her in a causal, unmanifest, and subtle state during dissolution, and in an effected, manifest, and gross state after creation (YH. YHD., 1, 50-52).

Supreme Divine Power (para Sakti) is the creator of subtle sounds (vak) and objects (artha). Parama Siva is the Atman or Brahman. His supreme power is manifested in the form of Logos, - speech (vak). At first, speech is extremely subtle (para). Then it becomes less subtle, and is called pasyanti. Then it becomes less subtle, and is called madhyama. Then it becomes articulate, and is called vaikhari. The Divine Power or Mother is modified into sounds and names and the objects signified by them. Her power of will (icchasakti) exists in the form of pasyanti vak. Her power of knowledge (jnanasakti) exists in the form of madhyama vak. Her power of action (kriyasakti) exists in the form of vaikhari vak, which assumes the forms of physical objects (YH., YHD., i, 36-40; ii, 19-20, 24-25).

CHAPTER III

SAKTISM AND ADVAITA VEDANTA

Sometimes Saktism describes Sakti as pure Brahman without difference. She is neither female nor male, nor neuter. She is one Brahman without a second. She is always one. There is no difference in Her. Difference in Her is due to delusion. When She creates the world and individual souls, She assumes duality and difference. The difference is imagined by intellect after creation. (DB., Vol. I.; Ibid., p. 151.) She enters into all effects after their production. She urges Brahma to create them, who cannot create without Her power. She urges Rudra to destroy them with Her power. She urges the individual souls to perform their actions in accordance with their merits and demerits. They are powerless to do action without Her power. (Ibid., p. 151-52.) They are subject to maya which is a power of Goddess, and are bound and liberated. She resides in all sentient beings, as power of infinite consciousness, (citsakti). She is not subject to daiva, an unseen principle, like men and gods. She is not subject to time. She urges men always to achieve their own goods. Siva is inactive Knower; all things in the world are known. Goddess is the Mother of all subtle and gross things. Her form of eternal consciousness immanent in all things is real. Her phenomenal, material forms of things are false, because they are non-eternal and full of Her mayasakti. Maya is a real principle (tattva) contained in Goddess.

Sakti is the embodiment of infinite being-consciousness-bliss, that transcends super-trance, a state beyond trance. She

is Mahamaya. Supreme Light of Consciousness, supreme bliss, supreme destiny, supreme perfection, and purifying effulgence. Her worship is either external or internal. Internal worship Consists in an individual soul's worship of Her transcendent form devoid of limiting adjuncts. Supreme, infinite, eternal consciousness is Her transcendent form. A devotee should dissolve his mind in this divine consciousness, and meditate on it as non-different from his self. So meditate on the Witness, Supreme Self, with mindless pure consciousenss in order to destroy bondage. (DB., Vol. II p. 93.)

Saktism agrees with Advaita Vedanta in destruction of mind (manonasa). Pure consciousness is supramental consciousness (unmani). Before creation Goddess, Devi, alone existed. She was in the form of Atman or Para Brahman, Being-Consciousness-Bliss. She was self-existent Power known as maya. She was neither real nor unreal, nor both because of self-contradiction. She was distinct from these states. She always exists in a reality. She is a real Consciousness-Power. Reality is the essence of (Consciousness-Power (Sakti). Merits and demerits of individual souls, souls and time were absorbed in Devi before creation in a subtle unmanifest state as non-different from Her. Some call this state darkness (tamas). Some call it matter. Some call it maya. Some call it pradhana. Some call it prakrti. Some call it avidya. Saivas call it vimarsa. But it is not matter, because Devi is Consciousness-Power, and cannot be an object of knowledge. A material thing is an object of knowledge. But consciousness connot be known as an object. If it were known as an object, it would be material. Consciousnss is self-manifest, and is not manifested by any other being. She is eternal whereas objects of knowledge are non-eternal. She is in the nature of bliss, and, consequently, most dear. She in the pre-cosmic state is the cause of all causes, the origin of the thirty-six principles (tattva), a mass of being-conscoiusness-bliss. Isvara, God, is a reflection of Goddess in maya, Her pre-cosmic state. (DB., Vol.

II., p. 87.) She urges Him with Her power to create the world for the good of the individual souls through Her grace. (Ibid., pp. 86-87.) The whole world is full of Her mayasakti which is not real apart from Her. Devi is Isvara, Sutratma, Virat and Atman. She is Brahma, Visnu and Rudra. She is Brahmi, Vaisnavi, and Gauri or Durga. In reality She is male, female and neuter. She is sexless eternal conscious-power. (Ibid., pp. 87-88.)

She is the root Prakrti always united with Purusa, creates the cosmic egg (brahmanda) and shows it to the Supreme Self. (DB.. Vol. I. p. 131.) Evidently, Purusa here means Infinite Person, Siva, and Mula Prakrti is Sakti, Divine Energy. She creates the universe and shows it to Siva. This verse shows that the world is real. Devi, Goddess, says, 'I am neither female, nor male, nor neuter. When the world is created, difference comes into existence. This difference is imagined by the intellect.' (Ibid.) This verse shows that the world of difference is imagined by the human intellect infected with primal nescience (avidya). This is the view of the Advaita Vedanta. There is a strand of idealistic monism in Saktism. The Brahman is one and without a second, eternal, always existent. When time in the form of creation comes into existence, duality or difference arises. When the Brahman creates the world, It creates difference.

Natananda describes some forms of Sakti. She is called *Vama* because She vomits and throws out (vam) the world of the five elements from within Herself. She is called *Jyestha* because She is beneficent to Her devotees. She is called *Raudri* because She destroys all diseasas and burns up all merits and demerits. She is called *Ambika* because She grants all boons to Her devotees. She is called *Santa* because She is ubiquitous and unlimited. The *Sruti* speaks of the Brahman as transcendental, inactive and tranquil. The *Vamakesvara Tantra* says, 'When Sakti, Divine Energy, experiences the impulse to manifestation of Siva, Atman, She assumes the form of Ambika, and is called *Para Vak*.' The

Pratyabhijna says,'Ambika as impulse to manifestation is pure Being.' She is therefore Para Vak excelling all and experiencing Her impulse to manifestation as Her own full nature. Sakti as Power of Will assumes the form of Pasyanti. Sakti as Power of knowledge assumes the form of Madhyama, the state of interpretation of Para and Pasyanti into each other. She is either subtle or gross. As subtle she is realizable by the yogins in the state of trance. As gross She is expressed in the letters of the alphabet. Sakti as Power of action assumes the form of Vaikhari, articulate words. (KKV, CV, 26-27, E.T., pp. 195-96.)

Sakti, Divine Mother, is called Kamesvari because She grants all desired objects or goods at all times to Her dovotees bacause |She is identical with one's own Self. She is in the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa). (KKV., 51, CV.) Siva is mere illumination (prakasa). Sakti is power as 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa). This is the view of Pratyabhijna Saivism also. Later Saktism is clearly influenced by Pratyabhijna Saivism.

I The account of Sakti, Divine Power, given by Pratyabhijna Saivism is briefly stated here. Vasugupta (800 A. D.) describes Uma as Virgin, power of creative will of Siva. (SS., i, 13.) He has power of will, power of knowledge, and power of action. His power of creative will transcends and excels His other two powers. She is Virgin and enjoyed by Siva in the state of Bhairava alone. She is Virgin because She is detached from all and engaged in prayer to Siva. She is called Kumari also because She is most venerable, transcendent and yet creates the universe from Sadasiva down to the earth by sport (SSVV., i, 13, 67-72). Bhairava is the enterprise of Siva in the nature of complete T-consciousness and internal spiritual vibration. Sakti is in the nature of 'I'-consciousness and internal spiritual vibration. Sakti is in the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa), self-awareness *of* Siva to be manifested in the universe. (Ibid., i, 5, 23-24.) Siva is illumination (prakasa). Sakti is 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa).

According to Somananda (900 A. D.) Sakti is in the nature of the power of freedom and 'I'-consciousness. She is in the nature of contraction and expansion. She contains the seeds of the universe. (PTTD. 45) All entities are expressions of Her parts. Somananda speaks of five powers of Siva: power of consciousness (cit), power of bliss, power of will, power of knowledge, and power of action. (Ibid., 193, 384.) They are spiritual vibrations (spanda). Sakti is immanent in the world as a matrix of tattavas, real principles. She is transcendent as in the nature of supertrance. (Ibid., 406.) She is both transcendent and immanent. Sakti unfolds the world through fifty letters. Letter-sounds and objects are inseparable. (Ibid., 150.) Thus Pratyabhijna Saivism and Saktism have influenced each other.

Utpaladeva (1000 A.D.) says, 'Sakti as the impulse of manifestation of Siva and Atman is Pure Being. She is in the nature of 'I'-consciousness and is called the Heart of the Lord. She is the Universal Being not differentiated by time and space.' (PKV., i, 45.)

According to Saktism, Goddess, Devi, is the cause of all. She is both Supreme Knowledge and Supreme maya, imperishable prakrti, Supreme Self's will, of eternal form and non-eternal forms. She is root prakrti always associated with Purusa. She creates the cosmos and shows it to Supreme Self, Who is the knower of it. The world is known by the Supreme Self. Maya is the material cause of all. Devi, Sakti of Siva, is the ruler of all, Supreme Lady. (D.B., Vol. I, p. 130.) Mahamaya, Mother of all sentient beings, has the form of infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss. She is immanent in all creatures as power of pure consciousness, which is Her real form. (DB., Vol. I, 201., Ibid., p. 44.) She incarnates as an Avatara whenever there is decline of righteousness on earth. Incarnations of Goddess are born with a fraction of Her power. They establish moral order, and destroy the vicious. (DB., Vol. I, p. 182.)

Devi appears and disappears for the good of gods and for

the destruction of the misery of virtuous persons in the form of Incarnations at Her free will. She is not subject to an unseen principle (daiva), like gods, demons and men. (DB., Vol. I, p. 445.)

But, according to Advaita Vedanta, the Brahman is timeless, spaceless, and causeless. Time, space, and cause apply to phenomenal appearances of individual empirical souls (jiva) and the world. The Brahman is pure Identity without any difference. Isvara, God, Who is the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent creator, maintainer, and destroyer of the world and bestower of grace and liberation on individual souls is the Brahman conditioned by the primal nescience (avidya) of the intellect (buddhi). The distinction of God and a devotee is due to avidya, and, consequently a phenomenal apperaence. But Saktism regards Goddess, Sakti, as real power of Siva creating, maintaining and destroying the world, binding individual souls to bondage by deluding them with egoism and liberating them through Her grace.

KUNDALINI

Sakti, Siva's Powar, or Divine Mother with the powers of knowledge, will and action lies in the Muladhara lotus like a sleeping serpent at the base of the Susumna in spinal cord. She resides in the Muladhara, the Anahata, the Ajna, and the Brahmarandhra lotuses. Residing in the first lotus She is called Kundalini. Residing in the second lotus She is called Hamsa. Residing in the third lotus She is called Bindu. Residing in the fourth lotus She is called formless, transcendental consciousness (SS., YHD., i, 42, p. 59.) She is all-prevasive consciousness (chaitanya) and eternal bliss unlimited by time, space, form and causality. She assumes the form of the universe in the proximity of Siva. The supreme Divine Power (para Sakti) becomes superior (para) prakrti, in the form of individual souls *(jiva)* and inferior (apara) prakrti in the form of ether, air, fire, water, earth, manas, buddhi, and ahamkara (BG., Vii, 4-5.) She assumes the forms

of individual souls and the world. She is full of all gods and goddesses. She is full of all mantras. She assumes the form of Sabdabrahma, and is full of fifty letters called matrka or mother. She permeates all principles (tattva), and is subtle and incomprehensible. She is the seed of all mantras and the universe. She is the Supreme Goddess. She creates prakrti and purusa (ST., i, 51-57 & 62, PD., YSU., p. 467. Varaha Up., p. 615; YKU, p. 556). She ought to be meditatated on as non-different from Siva, roused from Her sleep, made to pierce the higher lotuses, and united with Parama Siva in the Sahasrara or Binduchakra, and brought down to the Muladhara lotus. (DG., iv, 33, 48-49 & 51, pp. 192-94). A yogin should open the door to liberation (moksadvara) through Kundalinl. (DBU., 68, p. 289). The indiviaual soul should meditate on itself as a spirit in the heart-lotus, on Kundalini in the Muladhara lotus, and on the Supreme Self or Parama Siva in the Sahasrara. It should be united with Parama Siva by rousing Kundalinl and making Her pierce the higher lotuses and ascend to the highest lotus (TS., p. 73). It cannot be united with Him or become indentical with Him without the aid of Kundalini. She is the mediator between the jivatman and Parama Siva, although She is non-different form Him. Kundalinl, coiled Divine Power, or dormant power of universal consciousness (chitsakti) exists everywhere in the universe. Matter, life, mind, and superconsciousness are different degrees of the unveiling of the dormant power of consciousness. Even in an atom of matter there is coiled Kundalinl in the nucleus. Matter is dormant power of consciousness (CHI., first edition, p. 183. Cp. *Lights on yoga,* pp. 16-18, 5-8; *More Lights on yoga,* p. 16.) The *Tripuratapini Upanisad* says: 'Tripura, primal Divine Power, Sakti, is the great Goddess Kundalinl'. (TT. UP., i, 1, p. 532.) The *Devi Upanisad* says: Devi is matrika of the mantras, and in the nature of knowledge among the words. She transcends all consciousness among the acts of knowledge. She is the Highest Being.' (D. Up. 18) Kundalini is said to be matrka of letters and mantras and Sabdabramha elsewhere. So Devi is

Kundalini. Devi is the Witness of all kinds of void (sunya). The *Saubhagya-Laksmi Upanisad* says: 'Mediatate on Devi as Divine Power in the form of a luminous fire at the basic centre. (SL. Up., p 655.) Evidently, Devi is identified with Kundalini here. The *Vardha Upanisad* says: Siva in the form of Bindu resides in triangular muladhara. Kundalini, Supreme Divine Power, also resides here. The six estoric centres (chakra) are the seat of Divine Power, Sakti. Kundalini is Para Sakti. She sustains the human body. (Var., Up., V, 22, 50-51 & 53.)

Sakti, Divine Power, is the first cause of all causes. She is full of pure consciousness, and sports as Consciousness - Power. She is the great Kundalini That interpenetrates and permeates all entities. Sentient beings and insentient entities of this world are objects of Her sportive acts. (AR., UK, TT., p. 170.) Kundalini is Divine Mother Herself in the human body. By experiencing Her and uniting Her with Parama Siva at the highest centre, yogins cut asunder their heart-knots, and attain liberation. (Ibid.) Durga, Divine Mother, resides in the human body as in the nature of supreme consciousness, power of spiritual vibration. She resides in all sentient beings as of the form of Light. (DB.). This is the internal Light of Consciousness. (Br. Up. TT. pp. 174-75). Kundalini, is not physical vibration. She Herself is Matrka, seed of all letters fron a (अ) to *ksa* (क्ष) (KDT, TT, pp. 304-05.) She is the form of Brahman, infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Power (brahma-vigraha). Divine Power, Sakti Herself, is called Kundalini residing in the heart of a person. She is nada, prana jiva, and sound (ghosa), She is the matrix of letter-sounds. Para vak, supersubtle sound, resides in Her. (PS., TT, 309.) She sustains an embodied soul (jiva) through vital energy, inhalation and exhalation. She is coiled like a serpent in the basic centre of all sentient beings, and flashes like a lightning. She is Goddess, Power or Siva, full of all Vedas, all mantras, and all principles (tattva), in the nature of Sabdabrahma, and the stuff of heaven, earth and hell. (ST.) She is subtle and ubiquitous. Kundalini is non-different form Goddess, and in the

nature of Devi. (DG, 4, 33.) Sakti, Divine Power, sleeps in the form of a coiled serpent, surrounding Siva as Bindu in the basic centre. (DB., Vol. II, p. 439.) She is in the nature of knowledge. She is awakened by a fire kindled by the power of a yogin. Bindu bursts and becomes Nada. She is Matrka permeated by the rays of the Supreme Siva. The whole universe is permeated by Matrka illuminated by the rays of Siva. Siva is illumination. Sakti is 'I'-consciousness and 'this'-consciousnesis. Siva-Sakti is in the nature of Illumination (prakhasa), 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa) and 'this'-consciousness (paramarsa). Kundalini is non-different from Goddess, and in the nature of Devi (DG, iv, 33.) Devi, Goddess, is in the nature of the great Kundalini, and in the form of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. (DB., Vol. I, p. 288.) Kundalini is not a vital power of an individual person. She is the Ruler of the universe, Brahman, Supreme Self, residing in the core of the blissful sheath. (DB., Vol. I, p. 288.) She is the adorable Deity of the gods, free and autonomous. She is in the nature of Supreme Brahman. She is the Supreme Divine Power, power of will, power of knowledge, and power of action. In the muladhara She resides as Kundalini, although She is all-pervading. (DB., Vol. II, p. 439.) The *Bhavapradipa* describes Kundalini as subtle consciousness permeating the world residing in muladhara as a sleeping coiled serpent with three and a half coils. (TS., p. 63.) Sri Aurobinda regards Kundalini as yogasakti. If it means an individual's power of yoga, it is not confirmed by the Sakta Tantras. The texts quoted above unequivocally show that Kundalini is Divine Power, subtle Universal Consciousness pervading the world. She is subtle, dormant, unawakened, and has to be roused from Her sleep, and made to pierce the six esoteric centres of mystic consciousness, and be united with Parama Siva, Supreme Lord, at the highest centre. The uncoiling of Kundalini is the root of religious or spiritual consciousness. Self-control, control of passions, sex-power, by the self is the ground of spirituality.

SAKTI, NADA, BINDU AND KALA

From the qualified (saguna) Siva with the wealth of being-knowledge-bliss Sakti or Divine Power issued forth. "At the will of Siva His Supreme Power, eternal, ubiquitous, and non-different from Him came out". (VS.) She was of the form of being-knowledge-bliss, and the substratum of all principles (tattva). She was made manifest by the qualified Siva. Nada was produced out of Sakti. Bindu was produced out of Nada. "Siva endowed with Supreme power Himself became threefold: Sakti, Nada, and Bindu. Bindu is of the nature of Siva. Nada springs from the union of Siva and Sakti" (ST., i, 7-9, p. 10). "Divine Power under the influence of Siva is capable of creation" (PS). "She in the proximity of Siva, the supreme light of consciousness, desirous of creation, became condensed, and acquired the nature of Bindu." "The supreme Divine Power, non-different from Siva, all-pervasive, partless, supreme power of consciousness, desirous of creation, became Bindu with the predominance of the power of action." (PD., i, 7). Siva was the agitator, Sakti was agitated, and Nada sprang out of their union. Raudri issued out of Bindu; Jyestha, out of Nada; and Varna, out of Sakti. Out of them Rudra, Brahma, and Visnu issued; they were of the nature of knowledge, volition, and action, respectively, An unmanifest sound was produced out of effected Bindu, called Sabdabrahma. Laksmana Desikendra regards Sabdabrahma as the consciousness (caitanya) existing in all created beings. (ST., i, 8-13, pp. 10-11). Bhartrhari regards the eternal Brahman as Sabdabrahma. The Saktas regard the Divine Mother (Devi) as assuming the form of Sabdabrahma, (PS., PD., i, 13, p. 11). She assumes the form of Kundalini in the human body, and is expressed as sounds represented by letters. From Siva in the form of Bindu associated with time all-pervasive Sadasiva, the Witness of the universe, was born. Then Isa was born out of Sadasiva. Rudra was born out of Isa. Then Visnu was born. Then Brahma was born. (ST., i, 14-16, pp. 12-13).

Different accounts of Nada, Bindu, and Kala are given in Sakta works. Nada is the nature of God's power of action (kriyasakti). Bindu arises from Nada. *Om,* mystic sound, arises from Bindu. The power of action is in the nature of Sabdabrahma. (Sita Up., 4, 9.) Sakti residing in the basic centre is in the form of Bindu. She is not supported by any ground. Nada is produced in Her, like a sprout in a subtle seed. It is called pasyanti vak. It becomes a subtle sound (ghosa) in the heart and is called madhyamga vak. It becomes vaikhari vak, an articulate sound, being united with prana. (YS. Up. 3; 2-5.) The Supreme Reality is Siva-Sakti in the nature of infinite consciousness and bliss. Nada, Bindu, and Kala are the three eyes of the Divine Spirit. (PB. Up., 4.) These are the instruments through which Siva-Sakti creates, preserves and dissolves the world. The *Nadabindu Upanisad* identifies Nada with Siva. When a yogin listens to Nada in the heart-ether, luminous Brahman or Siva flashes forth, as the sun breaks forth, when clouds disappear. Nada is *Om.* When *Om,* Nada, unstruck sound, is heard, Siva, luminous Light of consciousness, appears. *Om* is a manifestation of Siva to a yogin. The mind of a yogin attached to the unstruck sound (anahata) in the heart is detached from the objects of pleasure, and becomes desireless. Listening to anahata, Nada *Om,* leads him to supramental state (unmani). Nada joined with *Om,* a symbol of Brahman, is luminous Light of Consciousness. The mind is dissolved in it. Brahman, Nada, and *Om* are closely united with one another. Brahman is Supreme Self, Siva; *Om* is the symbol, Nada is the unstruck sound in the heart. (NB. Up. 30, 40, 42, 46.) Meditate on God in the form of *Om* of the size of a thumb in the heart-lotus, luminous like a fixed light. He who sees Siva beyond Bindu, Nada and Kala in the heart is the true knower of the Veda. (DB. Up., 19, 37). Nada in the nature of Siva's power of action issuing from His mouth is Nada. From Nada arises Bindu. From Bindu arises *Om.* (Sita Up., 4.) The world is dissolved in a state, which is both invested with attributes and devoid of attributes, which is a circle without

parts, beyond Nada, Bindu, and Kala. (MB. Up., 2, 1.) Sakti residing in the muladhara is in the form of Bindu. Nada springs from Bindu, as a sprout springs from a seed. The imperishable, supreme Nada is called Sabdabrahma. When a yogin's mind is dissolved in Nada, he acquires clairaudience. When his mind is dissolved in Bindu, he acquires clairovoyance. (YS. Up., V, 47.) What is Nada is indeed Bindu. (Ibid., 6, 72.) Nada, Bindu, and *Om* are manifestations of Sakti, Divine Power, in the form of Kundalini. Kundalini is full of Sabdabrahma. Nada springs from Her. Bindu springs from Nada. From Bindu springs speech (vak). Speech is at first para, then pasyanti, then madhyama, and at last vaikhari. (ST., i, 108-11.) Raghava Bhatta in his commentary calls the pervasive Divine Power Kamakala in the form of coiled Divine Power (Kundalini). Kundalini is dormant Divine Power in muladhara. In the highest centre (sahasrara) She is fully awakened as a mass of infinite consciousness. Nada is Sakti, coiled Divine Power at the first stage, about to be manifested. Bindu is the Sabdabrahma at the second stage. It is manifested as a Seed-Mantra (bija). Then Kundalini is manifested as a garland of letters (matrka), fifty letters of the alphabet. (TT., pp. 34-35.) The letters are eternal. From the letter-sounds the objects of the world are created. The Saivas, the Saktas, Bhartrhari, the Sabdika, and the Mimansakas regard letters as eternal. Siva-Sakti, Supreme Reality, creates, maintains and dissolves the world with instruments of Bindu, Nada, and Kala, (PB. Up., 14.) Goddess (Devi) resides in a triangle, the abode of Nada, Bindu, and Kala as a mass of eternal bliss. She is devoid of a substrate or ground. (AP. Up., i, 4-5.) Again, Satrughna, a step-brother of Rama, is called Bindu. Bharata, another step-brother of Rama, is called Nada. Laksmana, another step-brother of Rama, is called Kala. Sita, wife of Rama, is called Goddess (Bhagvati) who is beyond Kala, in the nature of eternal pure consciousness. Rama is called the Lord (Bhagavat). He is the Supreme Transcendent Person (Parama Purusa). (TS. Up., iii, 7-8.) Sakti is beyond Nada, Bindu and Kala, and in

the nature of eternal consciousness. The Lord is endowed with power of eternal consciousness. Rama-Sita is Siva-Sakti, Supreme Lord. The *Devi Bhagavata* describes Goddess (Devi), Sakti, as both immanent in the world of forms and transcending it, formed and formless, in the nature of Nada, Bindu and Kala and beyond them. (DB., Vol. II, p. 441.)

Again, there was Goddess (Devi) alone before creation. She created Bramha, Visnu, Rudra, and cosmic egg. In the pre-cosmic state She is known as Kamakala. She created all creatures born of eggs, sweat, earth and womb. She created causal body, subtle body, and gross body of each individual soul. She is the Supreme Self, Atman, Supreme Consciousness of Brahman, transcending being, non-being, and Kala, Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Power, Great Tripurasundari. What exists is in the nature of Being. What shines or is conscious is in the nature of Consciousness. What is dear is in the nature of Bliss. You, I, all the world, and all Deities are Great Tripurasundari. *(Bahrchopanisad,* pp. 650-51.) It should be noted that Kamakala is identified with dynamic Divine Power Who created Brahma, Visiiu, and Siva. She is the pre-cosmic Goddess, Sakti, Supreme Self, One Consciousness-Bliss-Power. She is immanent in the universe, and transcends it. 'She is one and without a second. She is the most desirable and adorable, Mother of all, Original Wisdom. A Person desirous of liberation becomes the fulfilment of all desires by intuiting the most lovely Goddess, (Tripuropanisad, 3, 8, 11.). Punyananda calls Para Siva Kamesvara because He is the supreme object of desire and adoration. Para Siva is in the nature of Illumination (prakasa). Punyananda calls Sakti, Tripurasundari, Kamakala, because with the aid of Her love-sport or act of love, He creates the universe. She is in the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa) and 'this'-consciousness (paramarsa). They play with each other by contraction and expansion. Para Siva contracts His infinite illumination. Sakti expands Her power and unfolds the thirty-six principles (tattva) which lie in a subtle, unmanifest state

in Her, and unfolds the Universe. She creates the universe by unfolding Her power of I'-consciousness and 'this'-consciousness. She is Kamakala, because with the aid of Her act of love for Siva She creates the universe.

Pratyabhijna Saivism also uses the technical words - Kala, Bindu, Nada in different senses. Vasugupta says: 'The group of powers is the body of the kalas.' (SS., i, 3.) Bhatta Bhaskara describes the letters from *a* (अ) to *ksa* (क्ष) as kalas the causes of words. Goddess, Amba, Jyestha, Raudri, and Vama are Mothers, Divine Energies. Kalas are the rays of Divine Mother. They produce cognitions in persons when they are interpenetrated by words. (SV., i, 3, 19-21.) Kallata explains Bindu as mystic Light (tejas) seen by a yogin in the eye-brow contre, who practises meditation on the principle of ether (akasa). (Spandakarikavriti, 42.)

CREATION

The *Prapancasara Tantra* gives the following account of creation. Brahma, Visnu and Siva, the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer, of the universe are created by Aksara. They are modified by it, and dissolved in it. Prakrti and Purusa are eternal. The former envelopes the universe. Time (kala) produces changes in Prakrti with Her three gunas - sattva, rajas, and tamas. She is conscious of Herself (svasamvedya) and called Pradhana Sakti. She transcends Brahma, Visnu and Siva. She knows Herself as supreme, and, has no other knower. She becomes conscious in contact with Purusa or supreme light of universal consciousness. She desires to create, thickens, and becomes Bindu. This Bindu is causal Bindu. The causal Bindu divides itself through the instrumentality of time into the supereme, subtle, and gross states. They are called effected Bindu (karya bindu), nada, and bija. Nada is Bindu as causal action. When causal Bindu divides itself, an inarticulate sound (avyakta rava) called Sabdabrahma is produced. From it Mahat or Buddhi or cosmic egoism (ahamkara) is produced. Ahamkara is threefold:

bhutadi, vaikarika and taijasa. Tamas predominates in the first; rajas, in the second; and sattva, in the third. From bhutadi through Sakti with gunas agitated by time sound-essence (Sabda tanmatra) is produced. From sound-essence ether is produced; from ether, air; from air, fire; from fire, water; from water, earth. From rajasa ahamkara five motor organs, viz., vocal organs, hands, legs, and generative organ are produced. From sattvika ahamkara five cognitive organs, viz., ears, skin, eye, tongue, and nose are produced. The four internal organs, - manas, buddhi, ahamkara, and chitta - are produced from sattvika ahamkara. Mulaprakrti is called Prakrti, the root-evolvent. Five elements, ten sense-organs, and mind (manas) are the sixteen modifications (vikara). Prakrti (avyakta), Mahat, Ahamkara, and five subtle essences (tanmatra) are the evolvents (prakrti). The last seven are the modifications of Prakrti. The universe is constituted by sattva, rajas and tamas and their modifications. Sabdabrahma is undefinable by speech and intelligible to itself (svasariivedya). The *Prapancasara Tantra* is ascribed to Samkara (i, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28,40-46, 52-53, 55, 57 & 60, edited by Sir John Woodroofe, Calcutta, 1914). It accepts the Samkara cosmology with a theistic background, and regards Purusa as Siva of the other Tantras, and Siva, the Destroyer of the universe.

THE INDIVIDUAL SELF

(Jiva) - The individual self is bound to embodied life and called pasu. It is deluded by ignorance (avidya) created by maya, cosmic nescience, and experiences joys and griefs. Maya assumes the form of Mulaprakrti composed of sattva, rajas and tamas for its enjoyments and sufferings. The body of the embodied self is sustained by five vital forces. Avidya veils the real nature of the individual self as the Supreme spirit or Siva, and produces its attachment to the body and wife, children, property and the like. It produces the false sense of 'I' and 'mine', or egoism (ahamkara). The Ignorance (avidya) produces desires and actions. Right actions produce merits, and wrong actions produce demerits.

Merits and demerits are potencies of actions (karma). Avidya constitutes the causal body (karanadeha). Merits and demerits are deposited in the subtle body (suksmadeha). They lead the individual self to heaven and hell, respectively, and make it assume a body again on earth to wear off other unseen potencies of action. Thus the wheel of birth and death goes on. It ceases when the Ignorance (avidya) is burnt by the immediate knowledge of Siva-Sakti or Brahman to be its real nature. This saving knowledge can be acquired through the performance of duties (karma) and devotion (bhakti) by the grace of the Divine Mother. It is facilitated by meditation (yoga). (YH, ii, 63, SS., YHD., i. 61, pp. 165-66) Paramatman resides in the hearts of all creature as their Inner Controller (antaryamin). (YHS., ii, 62, p. 170).

Maya is the knowledge of difference among the apparent parts of Siva and all creatures, limits His omnipotence, and makes Him limited in His powers. It is the principle of individuation and expression. (Saubhagya-subhagodaya, YHD. ii. 34, p. 124). Higher knowledge (Suddha vidya) is the knowledge of non-difference between 'I' and 'this' (Ibid). Maya is the cause of bondage. Suddha vidya is the cause of liberation. Here 'maya' is taken as avidya.

Maya is cosmic nescience. It has the power of projecting a world of false appearances (viksepa) and (2) the power of veiling the real nature of Brahman (avarana). The former creates the difference between self and not-self, Brahman and the world, while the latter creates bondage to embodied existence subject to time, space and causality (SRU., op. cit, 17-19). An embodied self (jiva) is attributed to the Witness Self (saksin). It is the empirical self due to the reflection of Siva or Brahman in the internal organ (antahkarana). It is a false appearance of Him due to attribution. When the veil due to avidya is destroyed, it experiences its identity with Him. Siva, Brahman, or Atman united with a subtle body is the empirical self (Ibid, 20-22).

The individual or empirical self (jivatman) resides in the

heart-lotus as a luminous spiritual monad (DBU., p. 290). It has four states: waking, dream, deep sleep, and trance (turiya). The waking state is produced by the external cognitive and motor sense-organs supervised by the internal organs. Dreams are produced by the four internal organs - manas, buddhi, ahamkara and citta. Deep sleep is produced by the individual self alone. (Sariraka Up., p. 454). These states have their seats in the different parts of the heart-lotus (Hamsa Up., p 147). The individual self resides in the Muladhara lotus also (YSU., V, 5, p. 467).

Manas, buddhi, ahamkara, and chitta are the four internal organs. They are the different aspects of the internal organ. Indecision and decision are the functions of manas. Determinate knowledge is the function of buddhi. Memory is the function of chitta. Self-sense, egoism, is the function of ahamkara. (DG., i, 36-38, p. 180). Indeterminate consciousness is said to be the function of chitta (ST., PD., i, 37, p. 19).

Five sense-organs of knowledge, five sense-organs of action, five vital forces - prana, apana, samana, vyana, and udana, - and manas and buddhi constitute the subtle body (suksma deha). Merits and demerits are not the qualities of the individual soul. They are deposited in the subtle body, which is produced by the unquintupled elements. It is the cause of the gross body, which is composed of the five quintupled elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. When a gross body (sthula deha) dies, the individual soul departs with its subtle body, and may assume another gross body. Avidya, the individual soul's nescience, a product of cosmic nescience (maya), constitutes its causal body (karana deha). It is the course of its subtle body. (DC, ii, 31, 41-42, 46-48; iii, 25-29.)

The gross body is sustained by the vital forces (prana). It is the vehicle of the embodied solul's experience of joys and sorrows due to merits and demerits. It is subject to disease, decay and death. (DG, iii, 25). It is acquired by an individual soul

due to its potencies of actions (karma) for appropriate enjoyments and sufferings.

Sattva predominates in maya. Avidya contains sattva, rajas and tamas. Isvara, Lord, is the reflection of Siva or Brahman in maya. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and gracious to all. The individual soul is a reflection of Siva in avidya. Isvara is the presiding Deity of the causal state of maya, Sutratman is the presiding Deity of the subtle state of prakrti. Virat is the presiding Deity of the gross universe. Similarly, the individual soul limited by the causal body of avidya is called prajna. The individual soul limited by the subtle body is called taijasa. The individual soul limited by the gross body is called visva. (DC, ii, 47-48, iii, 27-28). When the gross body, the subtle body, and the causal body are destroyed, only the Atman, Brahman, Siva, or universal consciousness, remains. On the destruction of the threefold body, the limiting adjunct (upadhi), the individual self (jiva) becomes the Supreme Self (Siva). (Ibid, iii, 29-30.)

The gross body is called the bodily sheath (annamaya kosa). The vital forces which sustain the body constitute the vital sheath (pranamaya kosa). The manas with its modes - desire, anger, etc., constitutes the mental sheath (manomaya kosa). The reflection of universal consciousness in avidya or its product, the internal organ, is the intelligent sheath (yijnanamaya kosa). It is the empirical self, which is a knower and doer. The reflection of universal bliss in the internal organ is the blissful sheath (anandamaya kosa). The universal bliss (bimba) which is reflected in the internal organ is the Atman, Brahman or Siva (Panchadasi, iii, 2-10). The individual self should gradually transcend the five sheaths and identify itself with the universal bliss or Siva. The Sakta view resembles the Advaita Vedanta view. (HIP., Vol, I.)

Sakti, in the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Power assumed at Her will the form of sattva, rajas and tamas, though formless in Her essence, and created Purusa. Then She created

Brahma, Visnu, and Siva with the aid of sattva, rajas, tamas, respectively. Then She divided Purusa into Supreme (parama) Person and individual persons (jiva). Then She made Herself threefold: maya, vidya, and parama. Maya deludes individual souls, and entangles them in bondage. Parama is Kundalinl. That resides in human bodies as coiled Divine Sakti in the nature of spritual vibrations. She destroys their bondage to transmigration. Individual souls veiled by nescience cannot know Divine Sakti, as their origin and essence. When they acquire the intuitive knowledge of Siva-Sakti, the Reality, their bondage is destroyed. The *Chandi* says, 'Sakti Herself hurls jivas into the deep pit of delusion, egoism and bondage. She Herself being propitiated by their devotion and self-surrender grants them liberation from bondage through Her grace. She Herself causes their bondage and liberation for Her sport. (Chandi, 4, 9, 1; 72, 52, 48.) Individual souls mistake the non-good for the good, the non-eternal for the eternal, and evil for good owing to the primal nescience (avidya). They do not understand the real nature of the world and its non-eternal things. Siva-Sakti is their real essence. Their essential nature is the eternal Siva-Sakti. Souls are eternal and immaterial or spiritual. Body, sense-organs, manas, buddhi, wealth, property and the like are non-eternal, not-self, and evil. Liberation is the Highest Good. It is intuitive realization of the soul's identity with Siva-Sakti, Divine Spirit. (KNT., *Deva-Devi-samvada* 11-14.) That a jiva becomes Siva is undoubted.

In Saktism individual souls are real in their state of bondage. In the human body there is an individual self as well as Supreme Self, always friendly to each other. (DB., Vol. I, p. 383.) According to Advaita Vedanta, an individual soul is a reflection of Brahman or Supreme Self in the primal nescience (avidya). The *Devi Gita* adopts this view. But the *Devi Bhagavata* regards an individual self as Siva or Siva-Sakti as limited by five contractors (kancuka): time (kala), kala, raga, vidya, and destiny

(niyati). (DB. Vol. II, p. 350.) These are explained elsewhere. Pratyabhijna Saivism also holds the same view. According to the Advaita Vedanta, God (Isvara) is the reflection of the Brahman in maya with pure sattva, and an individual self (jiva) is the reflection of the Brahman in avidya with impure sattva. Maya is one and uniform in nature. So God, reflection of Brahman in maya, is one. But avidya with many impure sattvas is manifold. So jivas, reflections of Brahman in many nesciences, are many. God subjects maya, cosmic nescience, to His control. But individual selves are subject to the control of their individual nesciences. So God is omniscient while individual souls are endowed with finite knowledge. (TT, 116,) Cosmic nescience (maya) deludes individual souls and entangle them in bondage to transmigratory process. Devi, Goddess, in the nature of spiritual vibration (parispanda) or knowledge of Reality liberates them from this bondage. The Advaita Vedanta considers maya to be neither real nor unreal nor both nor neither. Saktism regards maya as a power of Sakti, and, consequently, real. She has both binding power and liberating power. She binds individual selves with Her maya and avidya,, and liberates them with vidya, power of saving knowledge. They do not know the nature of Reality, because they are fettered by bonds (pasa). They are deluded by their egoism (ahamkara), false conceit of self in the mind-body-complex. (KNT., TT., pp. 370-71.) Their birth is due to merits and demerits. They are born in celestial bodies because of the excess of their merits. They are born in the lower species because of the excess of their demerits. Merits are due to righteous actions. Demerits are due to sinful actions. Actions are due to desires (kama). Desires are due to egoism. Destruction of egoism leads to destruction of actions. Egoism is destroyed by the destruction of primal nescience (avidya). So far Saktism agrees with the Advaita Vedanata. But the latter condemns the performance of the prescribed works, worship of a Deity, devotion to God or Goddess, sacrifice, pilgrimage, observance of vows, performance of austerities, taking refuge in the Divine, and the

like, and regards listening to an Advaita Sruti, 'That thou art' or the like, reflection on it, and meditation on the Brahman, Being-Consciousness-Bliss as the only Reality. But Saktism regards all these as the means to liberation with the special emphasis on Kundaliniyoga. Meditation on the identity of an individual self with Supreme Self, Atman, is the chief means according to the Advaita Vedanta. Taking refuge in Devi, seeking Her grace, mental worship of Her as non-different from an individual self, and rousing Kundalini in muladhara, and making Her pierce the six esoteric centres (chakra), and uniting Her with Parama Siva, Who is omniscient and omnipotent, are the chief means to liberation according to Saktism. Saktism regards the union of the individual self with the Supreme Self as yoga. Advaita Vedanta regards identity of an individual self with the Supreme Self as the highest state. Both regard the intuitive knowledge of Atman as the chief means to liberation. Saktism regards intuitive knowledge as due to supreme devotion. But Advaita Vedanta regards Isvara as a phenomenal appearance of Brahman, and devotion at a phenomenon. Pratyabhijna Saivism, which advocates spiritual monism, though different from Advaita Vedanta, regards supreme devotion as identical with supreme knowledge. Saktism regards an individual soul and Goddess as loving each other and residing in the same body. The former craves for Her grace and completely surrenders to Her, while the latter takes it under Her protection, and sanctifies it, and gives it eternal bliss. Saktism regards an individual soul in the state of bondage as real and its worship of Goddess as real. But all are Brahman in reality. The knower of this truth neither requires yoga nor worship. If a person has acquired the highest intuitive knowledge of all as Brahman, he requires neither sacrifice, Japa, penance, moral observance, vows, fixation- of mind meditation, or worship. Merits, demerits, heaven, non-rebirth, bondage, salvation, all these are meaningless to him. (MNT., 14, 20-33.) Saktism regards the bondage of individual souls as real, and their salvation as real, though Goddess is the

ultimate cause of their bondage and salvation. Individual souls are deluded by Her maya and avidya, its effect, and bind themselves to a cycle of birth and death. They seek for Her grace, destroy their egoism and attachment to their bodies and objects of sense-pleasures, worship Her with supreme devotion, and acquire exaltation (bhukti) and liberation (mukti). They destroy their merits and demerits, acquire transcendent purity, and union with Divine Mother. (Chandi, i, 52, iv, 9, xi, 3, 7-8, 12. DB. , Vol. II, p. 369.) The souls are subject to bondage and release. They are deluded by Maya-Sakti. (DB., Vol. I, p. 444.)

The *Tripuratapini Upanisad* adopts the Advaita Vedanta view of an individual self. A jiva is a reflction of Brahman !in primal nescience (avidya). Many jivas are reflections of Brahman in many avidyas. A jiva is Brahman limited by avidya, even as one ubiquitous ether (akasa) is limited by a jar. Both are Advaita Vedanta views. (TT. Up., V, 12-13.) They are called the doctrine of reflection and the doctrine of limitation. (H. I. P. Vol. 111.)

The *Vardha Upanisad* also holds the same view. The Brahman limited by maya is Isvara. It limited by avidya is a jiva. Avidya is an effect of maya. Both Isvara and jiva are imagined in the ether of finite consciousness. When maya and avidya are destroyed, there is neither Isvara nor a jiva. The sense of 'mine' is bondage. The absence of the sense of 'mine' is liberation. (Ibid., ii, 44.) Egoism is bondage. Non-egoism is salvation. Egoism is due to primal nescience (avidya). Destruction of egoism, knowledge bf identity of a jiva with Brahman, is salvation. The *Annapuma Upanisad* also regards the knowledge of difference between a jiva, and a Isvara as the first error. It regards avidya, egoism, desire for sense-pleasure and mind full of agitation due to primal desires, as the causes of bondage. Destruction of them is the cause of liberation. When there is no avidya, there is no mind full of agitating modes; when there is no mind, there is no jiva.

(AP., Up., v, 10 x, Ibid., x, 10, 62-63,102, 111 & 117.) (H.I.P. Vol. III.) This is the Advaita Vedanta view. The *Saubhagya-Upanisad* also adopts the Advaita Vedanta view. When desire for pleasure is destroyed, manas and buddhi are destroyed. When egoism is destroyed, manas is absorbed in Supreme Self, Atman. When vital energy is restrained, when manas is absorbed in Atman, trance is acquired, and an individual self is united with Supreme Self. Saktism is closely related to Advaita Vedanta. (SL., Up., 15-16.)

THIRTY-SIX PRINCIPLES (TATTVA)

Both monistic Saivism and Saktism admit thirty-six principles (tattva). Parama Siva is both transcendent to the universe and immanent in it. (1) Siva-tattva is the first vibration of His creative will. (2) Saktitattva is the power or energy of Siva, His creative aspect, of the nature of 'I'-consciousness with creative bliss or delight predominant in it. (3) Sadasiva-tattva is the will to affirm 'this'-aspect of universal consciousness and assumes the form 'I am this' in which 'I'-aspect is predominant and 'this' aspect is faint. Will is predominant in this principle. (4) Isvara-tattva is the definite knowledge of 'this'-aspect of universal consciousness, - clear knowledge of the universe to be created. Knowledge is predominant in this principle. (5) Sadvidya or Suddha-vidya-tattva is the definite knowledge of 'I' -aspect and 'this' aspect of universal experience as equally balanced. The power of action is predominant in it (PH., pp. 7-12). These are called pure (Suddha) principles. They are evolutes of pure (Suddha) maya or mahamaya as contrasted with impure (asuddha) maya mentioned below (CHI., pp. 40-41; cp. STTS 6-11).

Maya and its five products called coverings (kanchuka) are mixed principles. They are neither pure like Siva-tattava, Sakti-tattva, Sadasiva-tattva, Isvara-tattva, and Sadvidya or Suddha-vidya-tattva mentioned above nor impure principles, parkrti and its modifications mentioned below. Maya limits universal consciousness, and makes the immeasurable measurable, and the

indeterminate detetminate. It has the power of concealing the nature of 'Siva as universal consciousness (avaranasakti) and the power of projecting the manifold world of appearances (viksepasakti) (SRU., 12-20, p. 647). This maya is impure (asuddha) as contrasted with pure (Suddha) maya mentioned above (cp. STTS).

FIVE COVERINGS (KANCHUKA) OF SlVA

Both Saivism and Saktism admit five coverings of Siva or universal conciousness: (1) kala, (2) vidya, (3) raga, (4) kala, and (5) niyati (PH., p. 52). (1) Kala limits Siva's ommipotence and generates limitation of His causal efficiency. It is the instrument whereby that ignorance that envelops the individual souls is partly removed. It evolves into mulaprakrti on one side and vidya and raga on the other. (2) Vidya limits Siva's ommiscience and generates limitation of His knowledge. It is the instrument activated by Siva-Sakti, whereby the individual souls acquire knowledge which is a mode of the unconscious intellect (buddhi). Vidya is neither wholly pure nor wholly impure. It is an intermediary through the aid of which knowledge of the souls is produced. (3) Raga limits Siva's self-fulfilledness and generates His desire for particular objects. It is the instrument activated by Siva-Sakti, whereby the individual souls acquire attachment which is a mode of the unconscious intellect. Knowledge and attachment are experienced through the aid of the intermediaries, vidya and raga which are neither wholly pure nor wholly impure. (4) Kala or time limits Siva's eternity and generates temporal distinctions of past, present and future. It is a factor in the operation of causes in producing their effects. Particular seeds germinate in particular seasons. Time is a non-intelligent instrument activated by Siva-Sakti, whereby the effectution of causes is regulated. (5) Niyati or destiny limits Siva's freedom and pervasiveness, generates spatial and causal distinctions, and regulates the individual souls' enjoyments and sufferings in conformity with their potencies of actions (karma)

or merits and demerits. It is a non-intelligent instrument activated by Siva-Sakti for regulating the maturation and fructification of the souls' potencies of actions. These are the five coverings or "contractors" of Siva, which limit His different qualities. They are products of maya. They have to be removed in order to attain to the perfect state of Siva (PH., pp. 12-13; CHI., first edition, pp. 38-39 & 173; cp. STTS).

Siva limited by maya and assuming the five coverings (kanchuka) becomes an individual subject (purusa). Any sentient being is a purusa whose knowledge and power are limited. A purusa is a spiritual monad (anu) as distinguished from a spatial point because of the limitation of knowledge and power.

Parkrti is the objective manifestation of the 'I am this' experience of Suddhavidya while purusa is its subjective manifestation. Prakrti is the equilibrium of sattva, rajas and tamas which are the gross forms of Siva's powers of knowledge, will and action, respectively. Prakrti is His Sakti. Purusa is the experiencer while prakrti is the experienced.

Buddhi, ahamkara, and manas are the evolutes of prakrti. Prakrti evolves into cosmic intellect (buddhi) which is modified into cosmic egoism (ahamkara). Cosmic egoism is modified into individual manas, buddhi, ahamkara, and chitta (vide ante). The last three are different forms of manas - the principal internal organ.

Cosmic egoism (aharhkara) is modified into five cognitive sense-organs - olfactory organ, gustatory organ, visual organ, tactual organ, and auditory organ. It is modified into five motor sense-organs - vocal organ, prehensive organ, locomotive organ, excretory organ, and generative organ. The sense-organs are really powers which operate through the sense-orifices.

Cosmic egoism is modified into five tanmatras or subtle essences of sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell. These five tanmatras are modified into five gross elements - ether, air, fire, water, and earth, respectively (PH., pp. 12-15; CHI., Vol., II,

pp. 36-37; cp. STSS). These are impure principles (asuddha-tattva).

KARMA AND TRANSMIGRATION

The performance of righteous actions produces merits (punya, dharma). The perfonnance of unrighteous actions produces demerits (papa, adharma). Merits and demerits are the potencies of actions (karma). They are the qualities of the internal organ, which is produced by individual nescience (avidya). They are not the qualities of the individual self (jivatman), which, in its real nature, is eternal Spirit. Merits produce pleasure and happiness. Demerits produce pain and misery. This is called the Law of Karma. The Divine Mother creates the universe in conformity with the individual souls' merits and demerits (karma) which are unseen agencies (adrsta). Until they produce their fruits which are experienced by the embodied souls with their merits and demerits, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth continues. Transmigration is the inevitable consequence of the Law of Karma. After millions of births in different species, an individual soul assumes a human body.

Merits and demerits accumulated by an individual soul in the past births, with which it is born, are called sanchita karma. Those of the accumulated karmans, which have ripened and begun to fructify in this birth, are called prarabdha karma. Those which are being acquired in this birth are called satichiyamana karma. Those which will mature and bear fruits in a future birth are called agami karma. They are all consumed by the intuitive knowledge (jnana) of the identity of the jivatman with Brahman.

BONDS

Bound souls are called pasus. Bonds are called pasas in Saktism and Saivism both. Bonds are of three kinds: (1) anu, (2) karma, and (3) maya. Anu is ignorance (ajnana). It is of two kinds, viz., (i) the absence of knowledge of the individual self as of the nature of Consciousness and (ii) the false knowledge

of the non-self such as the body and the like as the self. These two together constitute the impurity called anu (anava mala). Anu is so called because it limits the unlimited Atman. Karma is the cause of a body. It is an unseen potency (adrsta) produced by voluntary actions. It is of two kinds, viz., merit (punya) and demerit (papa). Merit is produced by right actions enjoined by the scriptures. Demerit is produced by wrong actions prohibited by them. Maya is the knowledge of one Self or Atman as many selves and objects. Siva is the only Atman. Those souls which are bound by the three kinds of bonds are called impure (asuddha). Those souls which are bound by anu and karma are called mixed (misra). Those souls which are bound by anu only are called pure (suddha). They are called sakala, Pralayakala, and Vijnanakevala, respectively. Bhaskararaya gives this account of the nature of the bonds and the classes of souls. (YH., ii, 43; YHS., p. 142; cp. PH., p. 119.)

Amrtanandayogi describes the nature of these kinds of souls in the following manner after the author of "Svacchanda-smgraha." Impure souls are bound by anu, karma and maya, embodied, ignorant of the nature of Siva, and possessed of the knowledge of difference only, They are devoid of the contemplation of the truth 'I am Siva', always attached to external objects, engaged in actions, and experience joys and sorrows as fruits of their past actions. They are called sakala, and worthy of being purified of their impurities. The mixed souls are those which have already experienced the fruits of their past actions by undergoing births in different species, which are related to their subtle bodies only, which receive the grace of Siva without the aid of a Master (guru), and which are made Lords of the elements in order to wear off their remaining potencies. They are called Pralayakala. The pure souls are those which are bound by anu only, which are devoid of karma and maya, and which know that Siva is the only reality. They are called Vijnanakevala (SS., YRD., ii, 43, pp. 140-42; TS., p. 44).

GOODS OR ENDS

There are four ends of human life: (1) wealth (artha), happiness (kama), virtue (dharma), and liberation (moksa). Wealth is generally pursued as a means of happiness. But it should be pursued by an aspirant (sadhaka) as subservient to virtue and liberation. Wealth for the preservation of life and for intellectual, moral, and spiritual development, and for the maintenance of one's family is in conformity with Dharma. But the acquisition of wealth for the gratification of lower desires and baser passions is repugnant to Dharma. Happiness consists in the fulfilment of desires for earthly enjoyments. Happiness should be pursued in conformity with Dharma. It springs from the harmony of desires with reason and Moral Law. Happiness is either earthly or heavenly. Heavenly happiness is attained by the performance of works enjoined by the scriptures. Dharma is a comprehensive term. It is the Moral Law, the law of social cohesion and harmony, the law of right living (sadachara). Dharma consists in performing actions in conformity with the Moral Law, which are approved by our conscience, the scriptures, and the sages. Dharma also means merits produced in the soul by the performance of moral actions. Righteous actions should be performed, and merits (punya) should be acquired. Unrighteous actions should not be committed, and demerits (papa) should not be acquired. Liberation (moksa) is the supreme end. It is release from bondage to embodied life, - wheel of birth and death. It consists in the union of an individual self with the Supreme Self, or the recognition of the identity of the former with the latter.

Five kinds of liberation are generally admitted: (1) salokya, (2) samipya, (3) sarupya, (4) sayujya, and (5) sarsti Salokya consists in residing in the abode of God or Deity worshipped. Samipya consists in living in the proximity of God or Deity worshipped. Sarupya consists in acquiring the form or qualities of God or Deity worshipped. Sayujya consists in becoming one with God or Deity worshipped. Sarsti consists in acquiring the

sovereignty of God or Deity worshipped. Saktism regards the mergence of the individual self in the Supreme Self as the supreme goal of spiritual discipline (sadhana). It believes in embodied release. A soul devoid of all desires and attachment to external objects can attain liberation in embodied life (jivanmukti).

SUPERNATURAL OR OCCULT POWERS (SIDDHI)

Concentration of the mind on the Divine Being at the centres of mystical consciousness attended with Japa of a mantra or a Divine name, and with meditation produces occult powers incidentally, e.g., the powers of becoming minute (anima), light (laghima), large (mahima), reaching remote objects (prapti), unobstructed fulfillment of desires (prakamya), and absolute control over physical objects (isitva), power of subduing others' minds (vasitva), and power of effectuating all resolutions (kamavasayitva). Sometimes power of becoming heavy (garima) is stated in place of the last. Clairvoyance, clairaudience, quick movement to distant places, telepathy, thought-transference, etc. are mentioned (ST, PD., XXV, 48-49, p. 548; PD., i, 88, p. 30; YH., iii, 118, p. 277; YTU., 73-77, pp. 300-01). They are not the inevitable coeffects of spiritual discipline. They are hindrances rather than achievements, because they thwart an aspirant's spiritual progress if they are utilised for self-glorification or other egoistic purposes. They follow a devotee of the Divine Mother, on whom She bestows Her grace, as servants.

CHAPTER IV

THE WORLD

The world is composed of Siva and Sakti. (KNT., 2, 83, *Gems of Tantra*, p. 79.) It is not made of matter, atoms, force, physical energy, or vital urge (elan vital). It is made of Siva, Divine Spirit, and Sakti, Divine Power. It is made of Siva-Sakti, Dynamic Spirit. Siva is not Brahman as mere Witness, static, Absolute, Being-Consciousness-Bliss, devoid of power and activity. Divine Power, Sakti, is inseparable from Siva. Siva is inseparable from Sakti. Siva and Sakti.are not two ontological realities. Siva-Sakti is the Supreme Reality. Sakti is not merely phenomenal power, cosmic nescience (maya), neither real, nor unreal, nor both, nor neither. Sakti is conscious Power, of Divine Spirit, superindividual spiritual power immanant in the cosmos and yet transcending it. She is inseparable from Siva, Divine Spirit. Siva is conceived by the intellect as the mere Witness (Saksin) of the cosmos, and Sakti is conceived by it as being evolved into the cosmos and embodied souls with their psysical bodies, subjects and objects, and yet transcanding the cosmos. The world is real, because it is an evolute of Siva-Sakti or of Sakti informed and inspired by Siva, or of universal Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Power.

Siva and Sakti are the sustaining power of the world. They are in the nature of the world. They are the life or soul of the world. The world is identical with Siva and Sakti. So they are identical with each other. Siva-Sakti is real, and so the world is real. (KKV., CV., 12, p. 31.) 'This World from Bramha down

to earth is pervaded by Sakti.' (KKV, CV., 11, p. 30.) So the world is real. All thirty-six principles (tattva) are comprised is Sakti. She permeates them and transcends them. So the tattvas are real. (Ibid., 7, p. 25.) 'Supreme Divine Power is in the nature of the sprout of the seed of the universe due to the mutual interpenetration of the manifest Siva and Sakti. (KKV., 3.) The Supreme Divine Power, Sakti, at Her will assumes the form of the universe.' (Agama) (KKV., CV., 3). 'Free Divine Power is the cause of the universe.' 'She is the Mother of all Deities and powers.' 'Kala full of consciousness manifests the world from Siva down to the earth.' 'The Divine Power T-consciousness is the eternal reality of the entities minuter than the minute, and is manifested as such. (KKV., 3.) 'The Lord Siva presiding over the principles (tattva) is the supreme cause; Siva is the efficient cause of all, Sakti is their material cause.' 'Siva, Atman, Supreme Self, in the nature of infinite consciousness, manifests the world of objects without any material, like a yogin.' (Rahasya.) 'He unfolds the world at His will in Himself as the foundation.' (Hrdayasutra.) 'The Supreme Lord paints the manifold world in Himself as the canvas at his will, sees it, and delights.' 'Sakti in the heart of Siva invisible to beings and yet deluding them unfolds Herself at Her will in diverse forms.' (Lalitopakhyana.) Sakti is their material cause. (KKV., CV., 1, pp. 2-3.) Siva is able to create, maintain and dissolve the world at His will. Sakti is able to unfold Herself at Het will in the form of the world, preserve it in Herself, and dissolve it in Herself. She is Kala in the nature of 'I'-consciousness capable of unfolding in the form of thirty-six tattvas and the world composed of them. Siva is Illumination (prakasa), Atman of the world, capable of manifesting Himself and other beings. Sakti is his power of 'I-consciousness (ahanta). (KKV., CT, 3, p. 14; Ibid., p. 15.) Sakti in the nature of I-consciousness was unfolded gradually as ether, air, light, water and earth. (Ibid., 45, p. 63). The world composed of the five elements is full of Sakti. The root vidya also is full of Sakti. She is called Mulavidya here. (Ibid 53,

p. 73.) The *Devi Gita* regards the world as false because everything other than consciousness is false and full of maya in the sense that it is non-eternal. (DC, 8, 45.)

Ahamkara and mahat are created by Sakti, Goddess. Prakrti is the state of equipoise of sattva, rajas and tamas. She is Brahman associated with power of maya. Goddess is *Om* and *Hrim*. She is the cause of causes. Maya and Prakrti spring from Her. Maya is-Supreme Power, Divine Power, creater and ruler. Maya is prakrti in the state of equipoise. The world exists in prakrti as non-different from Goddess in dissolution. (Db., Vol. II, 15, p. 438.) She creates it again under the influence of individual souls' merits and demerits for their appropriate enjoyments and sufferings. Maya is inward-facing and outward-facing. The inward-facing attitude is called yogamaya. The outward-facing attitude is called tamas or avidya. The outward-facing maya creates the world. Brahma endowed with an excess of rajas creates it. Visnu with an excess of sattva maintains it. Rudra with an excess of tamas dissolves it. Brahma has gross body. Visnu has subtle body. Rudra has causal body. Goddess has trance-body. The state of equipoise is the Inner Controller of all. (DB., Vol. II, p. 447). Transcending it there is Higher (para) Brahman. This is a form of Goddess devoid of any form. Her form is both devoid of guna and full of gunas. The former is devoid of maya while the latter is full of maya. Goddess creates the world, enters into it, and urges the individual souls to act in accordance with their merits and demerits. She urges Bramha, Visnu, and Rudra to create, maintain and dissolve the world: (Ibid.) Yet She is mahamaya in the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. She is the Cosmic Purusa; She is the Cosmic Prakrti, non-different from each other. She is detached, ground of all, Witness of all, higher than the highest. She endowed with maya is prakrti. The things of the world are its modifications. She is the Supreme Self of all, Ruller of all, cause of the causes of all, knower of all, and maintainer of all. She is of eternal form, of eternal body, devoid of form, guna, fear,

pain, and restriction. She is fall of eternal bliss. (Ibid.) She is called root prakrti, unmanifest (avyakta), undifferentiated (avyakrta) in dissolution, which becomes non-different from infinite consciousness-power. She is one Supreme Divine Power. She is Supreme Siva devoid of gunas. (Ibid., Vol. II, p. 224.) She is in the nature of Supreme Brahman, Who grants liberation to Her devotees. She is replete with the effulgence of Brahman. She is the presiding Deity of Brahman. (Ibid., p. 130.) She is the grantor of wealth, happiness, virtue, and liberation. She, Supreme Goddess, invested with gunas, sattva, rajas and tamas, and devoid of them should be worshipped. (Ibld., p, 377.)

The *Devi Bhagavata* mentions the thirty-six principles (tattva): Sivatattva, Saktitattva Sadasivatattva, Isvaratattva, Suddhavidyatattva, mayatattva, purusatattva, prakrtitattva, kala, vidya, raga, kala, niyati, buddhi, ahamkara, manas, five cognitive sense-organs, five motor sense-organs, five subtle essences (tanmatra) of sound, colour, touch, taste, and odour, and five gross elements: ether, fire, air, water, and earth. (DB., Vol. II, p. 350.) These principles are real. Pratyabhijna Saivism also regards them as real. *(Schools of Saivism,* pp. 8-15.) Samkara, the great Advaita Vedantist, does not recognize the thirty-six principles. Pratyabhijna Saivism and Saktism regard them as real, and consider the world to be real. Samkara regards the world as false appearence projected by maya with its power of viksepa or creation of manifold world appearance. He considers maya to be indefinable positive nescience, which is neither real nor unreal. Cosmic nescience (maya) veils Brahman and projects false world-appearance. Individual nescience (avidya) prevents an individual self (jiva) from knowing its identity with Brahman. Isvara is a reflection of Brahman in maya, and is a phenomenal appearարce. Jiva is a reflection of Brahman in an individual nescience (avidya), and is a false appearence. But both Pratyabhijna Saivism and Saktism regard individual souls as real limitations of Siva by five contractors (kanchuka); vidya, raga, kala, kala, and niyati. Though the *Devi Gita* considers jivas as reflections

of Brahman in avidya, like Advaita Vedanta, it mentiens them to be real limitations of Siva by the five contractors. Samkara believes in the empirical reality of jivas and the world until jivas realize their identity with Brahman. The *Devi Bhagavata* states an individual soul and Supreme Self as residing in the heart-ether of a person as friendly to each other, the former experiencing the fruits of its merits and demerits, and the latter merely looking on as a neutral spectator. This statement shows that Saktism regards an individual Self as real and friendly to Supreme self, and that both are real. (DB., Vol. I, p.383.)

The *Devi Bhagavata* regards Goddess as the Brahmam. Being-Consciousness-Bliss, absolutely free, urging gods, demons and men to act in accordance with their merits and demerits, but Herself as not subjeet to maya. She is neither partial nor cruel. She is mahamaya in the nature of Para Brahman. (DB., Vol. I, p. 326.) She is the cause of the bondage of individual souls as mayasakti. She is the cause of their liberation as supreme knowledge. (DB., Vol. I, p. 74). So individual souls are real; and their bondge and release are real. Goddess gives them excellent attributes such as intelligence, retention, memory, fame, fortune, kindness, moral sense, faith in the Divine, peace, lustre, and forgiveness. She bestows exaltation and liberation on them. (Ibid., p. 141.) Supreme knowledge (mahavidya) is manifested in the individual souls by the mantras of Goddess. (Ibid., p. 166.) She is composed of mantras and of supreme knowledge manifested by them. (DB., Vol. I, p. 494). She deludes individual souls, and gives them egoism, attachment, and bondage. She grants them supreme knowledge and liberation. (Ibid., p. 444). Thus Saktism recognizes the reality of the world and individual souls. But sometimes Saktism seems to think the world to be a false appearance like Advaita Vedanta, because it is non-eternal. But the world is real, although it is non-eternal. Vaisnavism thinks the world to bo non-eternal and yet real. Non-eternal things are not unreal and false appearances. They seem to be eternal to the bound souls because of their attachment to the objects

of pleasure. Attachment is due to egoism. Egoism is due to Goddess' real mayasakti. Maya is not unreal as Samkara wrongly thinks. Maya being unreal and yet positive nescience having the powers of veiling the Brahman and projecting manifold world-appearance is self-contradictory. Sakti is mahamaya, Mother of all sentient beings in the world, an embodiment of eternal being-consciousness-bliss. (DB., Vol., I, p. 201). This concept is better than Samkara's concept of Para Brahman devoid of power. Mayasakti is a real inferior power of Goddess. The world is pervaded by it, because it is an effect of mayasakti. (DB., Vol., I, p. 1.) It is an effect of root prakrti always associated with purusa. Both prakrti and purusa are real principles (tattva) comprised in Goddess. The effects of prakrti are real. Eternal consciousness is the real form of Goddess. Mayasakti and prakrti are different from eternal consciousness, and so are not Her real form. The world permeated by mayasakti and prakrti are therefore false. (DB., Vol., II, p. 93.) The *Mahanirvana Tantra* states the world to be false, like Advaita Vedanta. It says, 'The world from Bramha down to grass is imagined by maya. Para Brahman alone is real. A bound soul is liberated by knowing 'I am Bramhan'. Atman is ubiquitous, perfect, non-dual truth, Witness, higher than the highest. Brahman is one truth, knowledge and bliss. Saktism is identified with Advaita Vedanta here. But this is not the view of the majority of Sakta Tantras.

MASTER (GURU) AND DISCIPLE

A person of good parentage, of pure disposition, possessed of sense-control, proficient in all Agamas, well-versed in all Sastras, benevolent to others, truthful, tranquil, efficient in the repetition of a Divine name or mantra, worship and meditation, and prepossessing in appearance, is worthy of becoming a Master or spiritual teacher. A person of good parentage, and of good disposition, engaged in the pursuit of the four ends of human life - wealth, happiness, virtue and liberation, well-read in the Vedas, efficient, continent, benevolent to animals, respectful and

dutiful to the parents, engaged in the performance of his specific duties appropriate to his caste and station in life (svadharma), devoid of conceit of birth, learning, wealth, etc., especially in relation to his superiors, obedient to his spiritual, teacher in thought, world and deed, endowed with faith in God and future life, and abandoning the company of atheists and non-believers, is worthy of being made a disciple. (ST., ii, 242-52, pp. 67-69; TS., pp., 1-2). Those persons, who are always crooked in their behaviour, disrespectful to the superiors in thought, word and deed, always engaged in the gratification of their passions, arrogant, and indulging in the company of women, are not fit for being accepted as disciples. If a Master makes them disciples, he is vitiated by their sins. Similarly, a Master should be discarded, if he does not discriminate between right and wrong, if he lives an immoral life, and if he is puffed up with pride. But a qualified Master should be respected in thought, word and deed, and his instructions should be followed in the pursuit of liberation, and his guidance should be sought at crises in the course of spiritual practices (sadhana). If God is displeased, a Master can save an aspirant; but if a Master is displeased with him, there is none to save him. (YHS., i, 4, pp. 7-10).

In reality, Siva, the Supreme Self, is the real Master. He manifests Himself through a competent human teacher to a worthy person, when he is spiritually fit for being initiated in a mantra and instructed in a proper spiritual discipline. A human teacher is only an instrument through whom Siva reveals His power to a receptive soul. Hence a Master should be revered by a disciple like God. He should make no distinction between them. To look upon a Master as a mere human being is a sin. The meaning of a mantra is not revealed to a person, and his tutelary Deity is not experienced by him, if he is devoid of devotion to his Master and the Deity. (Svet. Up., vi, 23; YH., ii, 49; YHD., pp. 154-55; BS., 282-83; PH., p. 66; "More Lights on Yoga" p. 73; VSSV., ii, 6, 27.) A spiritual teacher (guru) should be born in a good family, be endowed with sense-restraint,

mind-control, good conduct, modesty, purity, good renown, efficiency, great intelligence, devotion to meditation, be expert in Tantras and mantras, and be competent to guide a disciple in his spiritual discipline. (TS., p. 1.) A disciple should be born in a good family, and be endowed with mind-control, modesty, purity, reverence, power of comprehension and retention, efficiency, good conduct and the other like good qualities. A sinful person of cruel acts, endowed with bad qualities such as deceit, miserliness, calumny, lack of devotion, foolishness, hatred of pilgrimage, should neither be a spiritual teacher nor a disciple. A good spiritual teacher should test a person for a year before he initiates him in a mantra. (TS., p. 2.) A Brarhhana who is born to a good family, who is well-versed in all scriptures, who has learned their meanings, who has mastered his senses, who is truthful, efficient, beautiful, well formed in limbs, and attractive in appearance, who is calm, respectful to parents, and dutiful as a householder, deserves to be a spiritual teacher. (Visvasaratantra). A person born of pure parents, pure in conduct and thoughts and intentions, self-controlled, well-versed in all scriptures, acquainted with their meanings, engaged in doing good to others, expert in worshipping the Deities and performing Japa of their mantras and other attendant rites, infallible in their words, full of calmness and equanimity, and firm on the path of Yoga prescribed by Sakta Tantras, is fit to be a guru. (ST.) Saktas should be initiated in a mantra of Sakti by Sakta gums. Saivas should be initiated in a mantra of Siva by Saiva gurus. Vaisnavas should be initiated in a mantra of Visnu by Vaisnava gurus. A Sakta following pasu disposition should be initiated by a guru following the same disposition, who does not cat fish and meat nor drinks wine in worshipping a Sakta Deity. A Sakta following heroic (vira) disposition should be initiated by a guru following the same disposition, who eats fish and meat and drinks wine in worshipping a Sakta Deity. A Sakta following godly (divya) disposition should be initiated by a Sakta guru following the same disposition. He performs Tantric yoga instead of eating

fish and meat, drinking wine and indulging in sexual congress in worshipping a Deity. (MNT.) A Brahmana who has acquired the knowledge of the past, the preasent, and the future, is fit to be a guru of disciples of all castes. In the absence of a Brahmana, a Ksatriya pure in conduct and thoughts and words and full of thoughts of God should be a guru of a Ksatriya, a Vaisya, or a Sudra. In the absence of such a Ksatriya, a Vaisya of such character should be guru of a Sudra (BT.) A Sudra should not be initiated by another Sudra. If be does so, he often suffers in this world, and goes to hell after death. (SAT.) (TT., pp. 336-38.) A deformed and deseased person is unfit to be a guru. A cruel, boastful, envious, miserly, deceitful, timid, sinful, lazy, unrighteous, atheist, averse to the worship of God, devoid of the knowledge of mantras, fond of evil company, engrossed in enjoyment of sense-pleasures, and addicted to dice and the like is unfit to be a guru. (Kalpachintamani). (TT., pp. 346-47).

A lewd, deceitful, mendacious, insolent, inefficient, foolish, sinful, uneducated, idiotic, irreverent, impatient, wrathful, adulterous, mean-hearted person, who is averse to the performance of religious rites prescribed by the Vedas, who does not perform his duties pertaining to his stage of life, who is of bad character, who is devoid of good qualities, who always harbours wicked thoughts, who is devoid of devotion to God, and who always calumniates others should never be initiated by a qualified guru. If a guru does not abandon such a disciple because of grecd for wealth, he is contaminated by his sins, and goes to hell. (RY.) (TT., p. 375.) If a guru initiates an unfit disciple in a mantra of a Deity, he is cursed by Her, and the initiation does not bear fruit. Both a person who initiates an unfit disciple and a person who is initiated by a guru against the prescriptions of Sakta Tantras are cursed by the Deity. (KNT.) (TT., p. 374.) A disciple should not be deformed, lame, blind, deaf, dirty, and diseased. He should not be hypocritical, disloyal to the King, hard-hearted, deceitful, covetous, adulterous, ungrateful, dissimulating, treacherous, malevolent, addicted to dice, lazy,

always sleepy and dozing and fond of disclosing others' secrets, finding fault with others, and speaking harsh and cruel words. He should not incite others to commit sins and crimes, speak obscene words, commit prohibited actions, omit prescribed actions, harbour evil intentions against others, commit arson, administer poison to others, steal others' wealth or property, bear false witness against others, indulge in wrangling and quarrel with others. He should not indulge in self-praise, be intolerant of others' excellence or exaltation, or bo malevolent, or be resentful toward himself owing to excessive wrathfulness. (KNT., TT, pp. 379-80.) A disciple should abstain from calumny, blasphemy, oppression of others, adultery, theft of others' wealth, and covetousness for others' land. He should be kind to all, restrained in his senses, intelligent, devoted to God and a spiritual teacher, resolute, firm in friendship, non-covetous, and endowed with firm faith in a mantra and a Deity. He should not speak falsehood, indulge in garrulous talk, show his lust, anger, greed, and conceit, in the presence of his spiritual teacher. He should not show his fickleness, crookedness, flattery, and lamentation to his spiritual teacher. He should not lend money to the teacher as a debt, buy his property or sell his own property to him. Do not enter into business with him. Treat your guru as Siva Himself. Be devoted to your guru as you are devoted to God. Be devoted to the mantra imparted by him to you, as you are devoted to him. Be devoted to Supreme Self, Atman, as you are devoted to him. Undergo spiritual discipline under your guru's guidance, perform Japa of the mantra, worship the Deity revealed by it throughout your life, and reach the destiny. (GT., TT, pp. 381-82). The good qualities which make a person fit for being a guru or a disciple show that spiritual life is based on the firm ground of righteous life according to Saktism. It is not a cult of self-gratification but that of harmony of enjoyment with detachment from sensual pleasures and devotion to and intuitive experience of the Divine. It is a cult of divinizing human life on earth. It is a cult of higher life-affirmation.

INITIATION (DIKSA)

Siva, the Supereme Self, and Master are non-different from each other. Siva is the incomprehensible, indescribable, indeterminate, nondual, Supreme Reality. He transcends all principles (tattva). He is the real Master of all souls. A human Master is His instrument in setting a bound soul (pasu) on the path to liberation. He is proficient in the Sastras, virtuous, and firmly established on the way to liberation. He initiates a bound soul in a mantra, awakens his dormant Divine power, and instructs him in a spiritual discipline for which he is spiritually fit. Siva initiates a person through a human teacher. He is the means and the end. An aspirant should meditate on non-difference of his self from his Master and Siva. He acquires an intuitive experience of this non-difference and the saving knowledge of one non-dual Atman or Siva as the ultimate fruit of such meditation. (YH., YHD., ii, 49, pp. 154-55; cp. BSSV., iii, 28).

A person, who is ignorant of the nature of Siva, and who has not experienced the Deity signified by a mantra by undergoing appropriate spiritual discipline, is not worthy of being a Master. A person, who is not self-controlled, virtuous, receptive, humble, and in quest of liberation, is not fit to be a disciple. A Master initiates a person in a mantra charged with spiritual power, transmits his spiritual power partly to him, and instructs him in the methods of worship, prayer, and meditation. A disciple should have faith, devotion, aspiration, vigilance, determination, and steadfast endeavour. He should practise spiritual culture throughout life according to the instructions of his Master (cp. Bhag., xi, 17, 27; vii. 15, 26-27; iv, 30 & 38; BS., 213). Initiation is necessary for entering upon a spiritual discipline. "Diksa is so called, because it destroys all sins, and because it generates the saving knowledge of God. Hence an aspirant should dedicate his all to his Master, and be initiated in a mantra" (BS., 282). All are eligible for initiation according to Saktism provided these are morally fit and spiritually inclined.

Initation is of three kinds: *Anavi, Sakteyi,* and *Sambhavi.* In the first kind of initiation a disciple should have intense devotion to, meditation on, and propitiation of, Supreme Divine Mother. The second kind of initation is aimed at the attainment of Siddhi by the worship of that Deity for whose worship he is qualified. In the third kind of initiation the mere grace of the Guru manifests the state of Siva and generates His bliss. For this kind of initiation both the Master and the disciple should be selfless and void of worldly desires. (KKV., CV, 52-53). Vidya is the original Supreme Knowledge revealed by Parama Siva, Supreme Lord. Divine Mother, Devi, instructed the Gurus in the vidya. Sadasiva is the most excellent Guru. Devi instructed Him in the cult of Sakti in accord with the continuous tradition. (KKV., CV., 52-53). Patanjali regards God as the original Guru. (YS., i, 26). Pratyabhijna Saivism regards Sakti, Divine Power of Siva, bestowing Her grace as showing the way to Siva. (SS., ii, 6; SSV., ii; 6, 23). Diksa (initiation) is so called because it gives the knowledge or consciousness of the Divine, and because it destroys sins. Japa of a mantra given by a competent teacher must be preceded by initiation of a disciple by him. Hard austerities also should be preceded by initiation in a mantra. An aspirant uninitiated in a mantra of Goddess cannot attain fulfilment in spiritual discipline, nor can he reach the destiny. Saktism, like Saivism and Vaisnavism, lays great stress on initiation by a competent spiritual teacher. Goddess Herself is the true guru; She initiates an earnest disciple through a fit human teacher. Mantras lead aspirants to self-fulfilment through the grace of Goddess. A spiritual teacher is the source of a mantra. Goddess Herself reveals the supreme knowledge (vidya), and instructs the human teachers in it after purifying them. Sadasiva also is said to be the original teacher, who instructed the human teachers in the spiritual discipline, which leads to the intuitive experience of Sakti. (KKV., CV., 52-53). Sadasiva is a pure principle (tattva) emanating from Siva-Sakti. In the word *guru*,

gu means darkness, and ru means dispels. So guru literally means it teacher who dispels darkness of mind or ignorance of Siva-Sakti. (Ibid., 51).

Bhatta Bhaskara, a Saiva of Pratyabhijna school, gives the Etymological meaning of *diksa* (initiation). It is so called because it gives the knowledge of Siva-Sakti, and because it destroys bonds polluting an individual soul. (SSV., iii, 28, 29.) Vasugupta says, "The Master is the means of attaining liberation." (SS., ! ii, 6.) Bhatta Bhaskara avers that a Master initiates a disciple because of the grace of Siva, and imparts His power of grace to him. (SSV., ii, 6, 23.) Pratyabhijna Saivism recognizes three kinds of initiation stated above. (HIP., Vol. III.)

MANTRA

A mantra is so called because it liberates an embodied soul from bondage on being reflected upon. It is a ray of light of transcendental consciousness (chinmarichi). It is not insentient, material, and unconscious. It is spiritual. All mantras are embedded in the foundational knowledga (vidya). They are due to the union cf Siva and Sakti (YH., ii, 1, p. 90). They constitute the spiritual forms of the Deities. They are not creations of human beings but revealed to the sages and seers (rsi) The different mantras were revealed to different seers (mantradrastr) and handed down from them to their disciples (YH., YHD., YHS., ii, pp. 90-190; cp. VSSV., ii, 1, 4-7; BSSV, ii, 1, 3; ii, 2, 7).

Mulavidya or Devi is modified into sounds (sabda) and objects (artha). Sounds represented by the letters (matrka) are produced out of Siva's power of 'I'-consciousness (vimar-sasakti) and sustained by Her. She is non-different from Her mantra. She and Her mantra are of the nature of pure consciousness (chit) as distinguished from mental consciousness or consciousness reflected in mental modes. The supersensible spiritual nature of a mantra is experienced by an aspirant through continual practice of repetition of it over years. (YHD, YHS., ii, 28, p. 117). A mantra is so called, because it is the abode of God,

because it manifests His spiritual form (rupa) when it is meditated on for long, and when an aspirant's vital current is permeated with it, and because it is a sign (linga) which represents Him. (YSU., ii, 7, 8 & 10, p. 463). A mantra without meditation (yoga) is ineffective; meditation without a mantra is inefficacious.

The Vaisnavas also regard a Divine name or mantra and God as non-different from each other. A mantra embodies Divine Power, and is really composed of pure consciousness and bliss (chidananda). To regard a Divine name or mantra as a mere insentient sound is a sin. It is spiritual and supersensible, and experienced as such through continual repetition and remembrance of it over years, which undoubtedly generates the realisation of its identity with the Deity. (CCA., ii, Ch. 4; HBRS., 1, 2, 43-44, p. 77; BS., 48-49; cp. PD., p. 67.)

All mantras are of the nature of letters. They are in the nature of Sakti, Divine Power. Sakti is in the nature of Matrka which is in the nature of Siva. Sakti is charged with the rays of the Lord in the world of Matrka, archetypes of letters representing sounds. This world from Brahma down to earth is permeated by Sakti. A mantra is so called because by reflecting on it a seeker gets true knowledge of the universe, is liberated from bondage to embodied existence, and attains wealth, happiness, virtue and liberation. (Gayatri Tantra, TT., p. 89.) A mantra is the means of uniting with a Deity that ensouls it. It is the means of meditation on the Deity that ensouls it. It is the means of meditation on the Deity. It is a means of absorption in the Deity, or trance. All mantras are in the nature of letters, or are a group of letters. All letters are in the nature of Sakti. Sakti is known at Matrka. Matrka is known as in the nature of Siva, because Sakti is in the form of Matrka which is charged with the rays of the Supreme Lord. The universe is permeated by Sakti charged with Siva's lustre. All beings from Brahma to earth are pervaded by Sakti. (Tantrasadbhava, CV., KKV., II, p. 30.) All known and knowable objects are full of knowledge or consciousness

(samvid), even as wood thrown into a blazing fire becomes fiery. (Ibid.) Sakti is replete with Matrka, fifty letters, and is' origin of mantras. She is in the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa). She pervades the universe of objects as 'I'-consciousness. From the union of nada and bindu the universe is unfolded. A word and an object signified by it are always united'with each other. They are full of Siva and Sakti, Illumination (prakasa) and 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa). Illumination is consciousness manifesting objects. (KKV., 12.) According to Saktism, Sakti is inseparable from Siva, and Siva is inseparable from Sakti. Sakti abiding in Siva creates or is unfolded into the universe. The universe is the manifestation of Siva-Sakti, and is inseparable from the Divine. So Siva and Sakti are inseparable from each other. (CV., KKV., 12, p. 31.) 'Sakti is in the nature of the universe and also transcends it, and is the heart of the Supreme Lord.' 'She is in the form of thirty-six tattvas, and transcends them as pure vidya, Tripura is the Supreme Sakti, subtle and gross, the Mother of the three worlds comprising all principles (tattva).' All objects are preceded by letter-sounds. Sakti creates letter-sounds and then objects siginified by them, 'The first letter a (अ) is Supreme Siva of the nature of illumination (prakasa). The last letter *ha* (ह) is Sakti, Kala, of the nature of 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa). The unionof Siva and Sakti, or mutual interpenetration, is manifest in the knowledge 'I am in another object.' (KKV., CV., 3. p. 15). Words and objects inseparable from each other, are created by Sakti and Siva interpenetrating each other. (KKV., 6.) Letters, kala, words, principles (tattva), mantras and the worlds are manifested in Sakti in the nature of 'I'-consciousness.' (Ibid., Saubhagyahrdaya, p. 18; KKV, CV., 6.) All letters are created by *a* (अ) and *ha* (ह), Siva and Sakti, Illumination and 'I'-consciousness interpenetrating each other. Siva, a mass of consciousness and bliss, is embodied in the first letter, replete with Sakti expressed in all principles (tattva). Siva is always full of bliss within Himself. He is the One Supreme Self, Atman, the essence of all embodied finite souls; He is in the nature

of pure consciousness united with Sakti in the nature of Supreme 'I'-consciousness. (Pratyabhijna, KKV., CV., 7, p. 24.) Sakti called Tripurasundari takes the form of Bindu, Nada and Kala and is the origin of all entities in the universe. Siva is Kamesvara because He is the most desirable, lovable, adorable. Sakti is His 'I'-consciousness (vimarsa), power of self-expression. She is expanded into the world. Thirty-six principles are embedded in Her and united with one another. She is unfolded in them, and yet She transcends them. She is immanent in them, and is transcendent to them. She is phenomenal and yet noumenal. She becomes the phenomenal entities (tattva) through Nada, Bindu, and Kala. (KKV., 7, p. 25.) Bhartrhari says, 'Originless and indestructible Brahman is called Sabdabrahma or imperishable Sound, that is expressed in the world of objects' (CV., KKV., 9, p. 28.) One letter in the nature of Nada is divided into all Nadas. It is of eternal form, and not produced by the impact of two physical bodies, and is called Anahata. (Ibid,) The Sruti says, 'This world is produced out of the Imperishable Sound (aksara)'. 'The aksara shines in the inner heart, the abode of Brahman, as devoid of sattva, rajas and tamas and parts.' Sakti, Tripurasundari, is the pure, transparent Divine Power full of Sabdabrahma, Logos, Eternal Sound. (Ibid., p. 29.) All mantras are groups of letters. All letters are in the nature of Sakti. Sakti is Matrka. Matrka is the Divine Power of 'I'-consciousness resplendent with the effulgent rays of Siva. 'Sakti is full of fifty letters which constitute Her body. (Krodhabhattaraka, KKV., CV., II, p. 30.) So mantras full of letters form Her body. They produce manifest Deities, and are the means of intuiting Siva-Sakti. Deities are aspects of the Divine.

Divine Power, Sakti, exists in a human body as coiled Kundalini. She resides at Muladhara and surrounds Susumna within the spinal cord. She utters subtle, indistinct, unmanifest sound called nada. The nada is manifested as letter-sounds (varna). (Prapancasara and Prayogasara. TT., p. 303.) The *Saradatilaka* says, 'The Supreme Self, Atman, resides in all

embodied souls as Sabdabrahma, Logos, Word. Sabdabrahma resides in their bodies as coiled Divine Power, Kundalini. She utters subtle sounds which are manifested as letter sounds.' (TT., pp. 303-04.) Kundalini Herself becomes letters from a (अ) to *ksa* (क्ष). She produces letters first and then all entities. Matrka is the seed of the world. (TT., pp. 304-05.) The Brahman, Supreme Bliss, endowed with Sabdabrahma full of all mantras resides in the bodies of all bound souls. Sadasiva Himself is Sabdabrahma, that is called unsruck subtle sound (anahata) in the heartlotus. (VST., TT., p. 304.) At the lowest centre, Muladhara, Kundalini utters *para vak,* supersubtle sound. At the navel centre, svadhisthana it becomes *pasyanti vak,* subtle sound. At the heart-centre it becomes thought-word, *madhyama vak.* At the throat centre it becomes an articulate sound, *vaikhari vak.* Thus, Brahman, Kundalini, Sabdabrahma, is the cause of four forms of letter-sounds. They become words, mantras, Matrka. So Kundalini is awakened by repeatedly uttering mantras, and meditating on the Divine Spirit at the esoteric centres with or without breath-control, and meditating on letters inscribed on the petals of the lotuses (chakra). They are significant symbols, the power where of is realized by spiritual experience. Mantras are not unmeaning jargon. They are not means of self-hypnotizing. (TT., p. 317.) The *Sarada Tilaka* says, 'Sakti resides as coiled Serpent Power (Kundalini) dazzling like a lightning at Muladhara full of all the Vedas, all mantras, all principles (tattvas), of the form of Sabdabrahma, and generating heaven, earth and hell.' (TT. 318.) 'Kundalini full of Sabdabrahma, produces para, pasyanti, madhyama, and vaikhari speech (vak) and fifty letter-sounds.' (ST., i., 108-11.)

A Deity is in the form of a Mantra. A Mantra is the sound-form of a Deity. (KNT., 6, 86.) It is charged with spiritual power by a competent Master (Guru) who has realized the Deity. A disciple awakens the spiritual power, and experiences the divine consciousness that is manifested in a Deity by repeatedly uttering

it with concentration of the mind and meditation on the particular aspect of Divine Spirit throughout life. A mantra is the sound pattern of a Deity. The Deity is said to be produced by a Mantra. It means that a Deity is revealed and manifested to the consciousness of a yogin by a particular mystic sound-pattern. A Deity is the soul of a Mantra. A Mantra is ensouled by a Deity. To regard a Mantra as a mere configuration of letters or sounds, or a mere physical sound, is a sin, even as to regard an earthen, stony or metallic Image of a Deity as earthen or the like is a sin. An Image ought to be worshipped as a *Deity*, an aspect of the Divine, and not as a symbol. So a Mantra should not be regarded as a group of letters. A Deity is the soul of a Mantra.

Siva, the Lord of the universe, Himself is the Guru; the Mantra uttered by Him through a human agent and imparted to a disciple gives the saving knowledge. The root of the fulfilment (siddhi) of spiritual discipline is the Guru. His grace facilitates the fulfilment. (VST, TT., p. 332.) The Guru is Brahma, Visnu, Siva, and Devi, Consort of Siva. The whole world is full of the Guru. The scriptures are not greater than the Guru; penance is not greater than He. Siva Mantra is not greater than He. A Mantra is not greater than He. Devi, Goddess, Durga, is not greater than He. A Mantra is called the Guru. He is identical with Siva-Sakti in essence. He should be meditated on in thousand-petalled lotus, the highest centre. (RY; TT, p. 333.) A person dies a spiritual death by abandoning a Mantra, becomes spiritually poor by abandoning a Guru, and goes to hell after death by abandoning both. (KNT, VT, p. 344.) Repeated utterance of a Mantra originates in initiation in it; great penance originates in initiation (diksa). An uninitiated person never reaches the highest destiny or self-fulfilment. His japa, worship and the like never bear fruit. (TT., p. 365). So initiation is absolutely necessary. When demerits are destroyed by merits, when some potent merit acquired in the past birth is about to

bear fruit, when Siva-Sakti favours an embodied soul, and when an inclination in it to worship the Lord arises in its mind, Siva Himself through a human agent, Master, Guru, initiates an aspirant in an appropriate Mantra charged with Divine Power. (KKV, CV., I, p. 6.) A Guru is so called because he utters a Mantra signifying the Supreme Reality. He shows a disciple the power of a Mantra to manifest the Lord. He shows the disciple how a hymn chanted pervades the world and touches all-pervasive Brahman. (KKV., CV., 1, p.7.) A Guru is a means of realizing Brahman. Initiation (diksa) etymologically means that it gives identity of a disciple with Siva, and that it destroys three kinds of taints or bonds: anu, karman, and maya. It gives union with Siva.

The Guru is Sadasiva Himself; Sadasiva through the medium of a human agent gives a disciple enjoyment and liberation. He who makes a difference between a Guru and a Sadasiva goes to hell. (KNT., TT., p. 329.) A Mantra, a group of letter-sounds, is produced by a Guru; a Deity is produced by a Mantra. Really a Mantra is eternal, and a Deity is eternal. A Mantra is manifested by a Guru, and a Deity is manifested by a mantra. (MMT., TT., p. 325.)

The *Sita Upanisad* describes Sita as the root prakrti in the nature of Om and prakrti. She is the being of Brahman endowed with power of will, power of knowledge, and power of action. She is full of Sabdabrahma, the source of Rk, Sama, and Yajus Vedas. She is full of mantras. (1-2, 5.) Sakti, Divine Power, is the origin of mantras. Rama is endowed with lovely form and full of power of *maya.* He is *Om,* and of the form of Vedas. He is the form of Atman, Supreme Self. (RPT, 4; 3-4.) Sita is the Supreme Goddess, the Mother of the world. (Ibid., 3, 8.) The *Devi Upanisad* says, 'The Divine Mother is the matrix (matrka) of all mantras, in the nature of knowledge corveyed by letters and words, replete with pure consciousness incomprehensible by knowledge, and Witness of the void (17).

A Yantra is an appropriate Diagram or a configuration of dots, lines, triangles, and circles representing a Deity, Worship of a Deity is carried on through that of a mystic Diagram ensouling the Deity with concentration and meditation. (KNT., 6, 87.) A Yantra is not a mere physical line-pattern but charged with spiritual power latent in it. It becomes patent by the power of worship of the Diagram ensouled by a Mantra which constitutes the body of a Deity. A Mantra is a form of spiritual rays emanating from Siva-Sakti. It is really composed of supramental pure consciousness (cit) and bliss (ananda) of the Lord embodied in the form of a mystic sound-form. A Yantra also is a mystic line-pattern composed of a Mantra or spiritual rays of Siva-Sakti expressed in a mystic sound-pattern. 'Mantra', 'Yantra', and 'Devata' are inseparable from one another and have esoteric meanings. They are incomprehensible by reason.

All Deities ensoul some mystic Diagrams (yantra), as a soul ensouls a human body. So a Yantra should be drawn on paper, or engraved on a sheet of metal and worshipped in proper way prescribed by a Sakta Tantra. A Deity is quickly propitiated by the worship of a Yantra. (KNT., TT., p. 393.) A Yantra is so called because it restrains evil passions e.g., lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy. (Ibid.) Five triangles surrounded by two concentric circles, the inner circle touching the three ends of the outermost triangle, and the outer cirele touching the ends of eight petals of a lotus touching the inner circle, the entire figure being contained in a square, is the mystic Diagram of the Goddess Kali. Shyam Sastri has shown that Tannic Yantras and chakras are mentioned in *Atharva Veda* and *Taittinya Aranyaka.* (Tantra Katha, Visvabharati v. 3.) Damodara, author of *Yantrachintamani,* describes it as the essence of the Atharva Veda. The author of *Kularnava Tantra* has described the Sakta doctrine as derived from the Vedas (2, 85.) Laksmidhara, a commentator on the *Saundarya Lahari,* describes Srividya as derived from the *Taittiriya Brahmana and Aranyaka* (32). (Ibid.)

Mantras and yantras both are full of spiritual significance. The Sakta Tantras teach that the world is the manifestation of Divine Power, and that the human body is full of divire powers. The spiritual discipline brings out these powers and enables a soul to shed its bonds and realize Sakti.

Laksmidhara describes para vak as full of pure consciousness and bliss or Brahman, pasyanti vak as full of reflection or 'I'-consciousness (paramarsa) of Sakti, Divine Power, devoid of pain, madhyama vak as unexpressed thought-word unperceived by others, and vaikhari as expressed in the form of an articulate word due to the contact with the throat and the like vocal organs, which is perceived by others, Speech is inseparable from Para Brahman's power of consciousness attended with reflection on 'I'-consciousness (PTV., 35.) All these forms of speech are the Sakti of Siva, immaterial, spiritual in their essence. So a Mantra, a group of words, is spiritual in its essence. Para vak is the seed of letters (varna) constituting a Mantra, which is, in its essence, pure consciousness (cit) beyond the mind (manas) *M*adhyama vak precedes vaikhari vak, airculate speech. Thought precedes speech. It rises above mere vital functions of life-forces, and follows the order of the ingredients of intellect (buddhi). (Ibid., 34.) Creation of the world is preceded by creation of letters from a (अ) to *ksa* (क्ष). God's 'I'-consciousness, which is in the nature of bliss, is the origin of creation. Para vak is Brahman, pure Being-Consciousness -Bliss. (Ibid., 9.) 'All this is *Om* ' (Mund, Up., 1.)

WORSHIP (PUJA)

The worship of Divine Mother should be performed every day by an aspirant initiated by a competent teacher in a mantra of a Deity. It is of three kinds: (1) the highest (para), (2) the intermediate (parapara), and the lowest (apara). (1) The worship of the nondual power of Siva, established in Her greatness, without offerings of flowers and other articles is the highest. It is mental worship consisting in the contemplation of Divine

Mother as undifferentiated power of pure consciousness and bliss. (2) The worship of Her consisting in the absorption of the mind in Her abode in meditation in which there is the knowledge of the distinction between the worshipper and the worshipped is the intermediate form of worship. (3) The worship of Her in the form of a mystic diagram (yantra) or an Image in which the knowledge of the above distinction is prominent is the lowest. It is an external act of worship with flowers, fruits aud other articles as an aid to manifest the consciousness of nondual Divine Power. Even the wise should perform it as subsidiary to the higher forms of worship. The extroverts who cannot concentrate their minds on the abstract concept of nondual dynamic consciousness-bliss should worship a diagram or an Image with the mind fixed on the Divine Being without thinking it to be a mere symbol, because a symbol is really the Divine Power and composed of pure consciousness and bliss (chidananda). This act spiritualises the physical act of worship and the physical objects used in it. An Image (vigraha) and the essence (svarupa) of the Divine Being are nondifferent from each other becaust they are spiritual, (CCA. ii, 17). A yantra is a mystic diagram representing the Divine Being and the universe. If is either engraven on a metal or drawn on paper and worshipped like an Image. The highest kind of worship is full of knowledge while the lowest kind of it is full of works. The intermediate kind of it partakes of both because the mind is fixed on the identity of the worshipper with a diagram or an Image in it. It is a daily obligatory duty (nitya karma), It is not motivated by a desire for earthly or heavenly happiness (kamya karma). Nor is it an occasional duty (naimittika karma) appropriate to particular occasions (eg., solar eclipse, lunar eclipse, etc). It culminates in the knowledge of nondual power of consciousness-bliss. The highest kind of worship is devoid of the experience of duality and difference. The lowest kind of it is devoid of the experience of nonduality and non-difference. The intermediate kind of it is external worship in which efforts are made to destroy

the experience of duality and difference. In the highest kind of worship, there is the experience of a part of infinite existence consciousness-bliss in the cognitions of all objects produced by the external sense-organs, and there is no experience of concrete objects. The consciousness of the Divine Being in manifestested through the sense-organs and the internal organs. The non-difference between the worshipping self and the Divine Being of the nature of undifferentiated existence consciousness-bliss is manifested in it. It consists in consuming all deteminations (vikalpa) in the sacrificial fire of Siva of the nature of manifestation (prakasa), and of Sakti of the nature of ' I'-consciousness (vimarsa) nondifferent from Siva. (YH., YHD., iii, 2, pp. 191-92; YHS., iii, 2-4, pp. 193-94).

The worship of an Image (pratima) requires the following: (1) the seat of an Image (asana), (2) welcome (svagata), (3) water for washing the feet (padya), (4) offering unboiled rice, flowers, sandal paste, and durva grass to the Divine Mother in a vessel (arghya), (5) water for sipping (achamana), (6) a brass cup containing honey, ghee, milk and curd (madhuparka), (7) emblic myrobalan fruit (amalaka), (8) water for bathing (snana), (9) cloth (vastra), (10) ornaments (abharana), (11) scent, e.g. sandal paste (gandha), (12) flowers (puspa), (13) incense (dhupa), (14) a lamp (dipa), (15) food (naivedya), and (16) prayer (vandana) and obeisance (namaskara). (TS., p. 81). Sometimes bael leaves, lotuses, etc., soaked in ghee are burnt in a sacrificial fire (yajna) with the utterance of mantras. Sometimes he-goats, rams, and male buffalo calves are sacrificed as substitutes for lust, anger, greed and other passions. This practice is dying out. Sugar canes and gourds are cut into two pieces for animals. Oblations to a sacrificial fire and animal sacrifice are not indispensable for the external worship of Divine Mother. (PD., iii, 93 ff, pp. 156 ff).

Worship is preceded by purification of the place of worship and purification of the elements of the body by uniting them

with the Divine Being. (TS., p. 73). Worship is preceded by invoking the rays of transcendental conscicrusness (chinmarichi) from the Deities in the body, spiritualising it, and making it fit for worship. There is a saying: "A non-Siva cannot worship Siva". (TS., pp. 72-76).

Mental worship is superior to external worship. They are not exclusive of each other. An aspirant may perform external worship at some time and mental worship at same other time. They strengthen each other. He is enjoined to rise at dawn, purify himself, meditate on Kundalini at the Muladhara lotus, the subtle power of cosmic consciousness resembling a coiled sleeping serpent, kindle fire with the vital air, awaken subtle speech (para vak), and then carry Her up to the Sahasrara lotus, and unite Her with Parama Siva. Then he should carry Her down to the Muladhara lotus. Then he should worship Her with mental articles. (TS., pp. 63-64).

IMAGE

An Image or Idol is not worshipped as a physical object. A Deity is invoked in it and then worshipped. An aspirant who looks upon an Image as a mere physical thing goes to hell. Similarly, if he regards a mantra as a mere sound, he goes to hell. An Image, a name or a mantra of a Deity, and the essence of a Deity are composed of pure consciousness-bliss. (CCA., ii, ch. 17). An Image worshipped is not a mere symbol, but the Deity invoked in it. The spiritual form of the Deity is revealed to a worshipper in course of time. (TS., p. 1). The *Bhagavata says:* 'God should be worshipped in an Image, Who abides in all creatures, until a devotee experiences Him in his heart' (Bhag., iii, 29, 25). Jiva Gosvami interprets it thus: a devotee should worship God in an Image with faith even after he has attained the intutive knowledge of Him. The *Pancharatra* inculcates the worship of an installed Image at all times without any break. But the worship of God in an Image does not bear fruit without compassion for all creatures in whom He dwells.

Hence such worship should be attended with good will and friendship for all, charity and respect. (Bhag., iii, 29, 26-27; BHS., 106.)

INNER WORSHIP

The *Bhavana Upanisad* inculcates inner worship in the form of meditation as distinguished from external worship of an Image or a diagram (yantra). It regards the body as Srichakra. Kundalini, dormant Divine Power, - the power of knowledge, is the house. The power of will is Mahatripurasundari. A knower is the priest who makes offerings to a saerificial fire. Knowledge is fire. A known object is melted butter. Meditation on non-difference of a knower, knowledge, and a known object is the worship of Srichakra. Sattva which is the cause of happiness is water, which purifies the body. Reflection on right and wrong is an offering. A volition that the external sense-organs and the internal organs may apprehend their proper objeets is invocation. The apprehension of one Brahman by the external sense-organs and the internal organs is posture. The unification of the individual self with the Supreme Self or Siva-Sakti by raising the Divine Power in the Muladhara lotus to the Ajnachakra, through Susumna is offering water for washing the feet of the Deity. The realisation of one's transparence or purity is sipping water. Immersion of the whole body in the nectar of pure consciousness is ablution. Pure consciousness is not consciousness through a mental mode, or mental consciousness. It is the transcendental non-empirical consciousness of Siva-Sakti, which is the essence of the individual self. The manifestation of the power of supreme bliss which is the essence of pure consciousness is a cloth. Susumna of Barhmanadi extending from the Muladhara chakra to the Ajnachakra in which Divine Power in the forms of the power of knowledge, the power of will, and the power of action, is experienced is the sacred thread. Recollection or thought of the self's being devoid of attachment to objects other than itself is an ornament. The individual self is really identical with the

Supreme Self or Siva and absolutely detached and transcendent. Recollection of Brabman or Being-Consciousnes-Bliss as the Supreme Reality is a scent. The quest for the ground of all objects with a steady mind is a flower. Identifying them with the Atman or Self is incense. The meteoric flash of the Brahman or Being-Consciousness-Bliss in an ethereal body, is a lamp. The cessation of all movements from one sensible object to another is food offered. Identification of all degrees of consciousness - waking state, dream, deep sleep, and trance - is a betel. The Atman shines in them all. All degrees of consciousness are permeated by the intuitive experience of the Atman, Brahman, or Siva. The ascent of the Kundalini from the Muladhara to the Sahasrara and Her descent from the latter to the former are circumambulation. Trance or ecstatic consciousness is obeisance. Merging in the Knower (Atman) without a body is the sacrifice of an animal. The experience of the disembodied Self or Atman who is the true knower is animal sacrifice. Merging of the individual self in the Supreme Self and consuming the sense of the moral, the immoral, and the non-moral, in the knowledge of the Supreme Self an the only reality are an oblation to a sacrificial fire. Immersion of the individual self in the Supreme Self is perfect meditation. Suck meditation makes an aspirant released in embodied life.

JAPA

Repeated muttering of a mantra called japa is of three kinds: (1) external (bahya), (2) slightly audible (upamsu), and (3) mental (manasa). An aspirant gradually passes from the first to the second, and then from the second to the third as his mind is directed from the external world to the inner world. External Japa consists in uttering a mantra with the vocal organs. It is not true Japa. Internal Japa consists in concentration of mind on Nada in the heart-lotus. The former consists in uttering various sounds represented by letters in a mantra. The latter consists in repeated contemplation of the power of infinite consciousness

embodied in a mantra which assumes the form of Nada in the heart-lotus after completely withdrawing the manas and the external sense-organs from their objects. Nada is a mystic sound which is not due to the impact of tangible substances (anahata). Internal Japa is different from vocal utterance of a mantra and mental representation of the act. (YHD., iii, 6-7, pp. 195-96; YHS., pp. 197-98). Of the three kinds of Japa, audible, slightly audible, and mental, the third is superior to the second, and the second is superior to the first. 'The sacrifice of Japa (japa-yajna) is ten times better than the performance of a sacrifice. Slightly audible Japa is a hundred times better than a sacrifice. Mental Japa is a thousand times better than a sacrifice, (Bhrgusamhita, PD., XV, 56, p. 390). Lord Krsna says, "I am the sacrifice of Japa among the sacrifices." (BG., X, 25; cp. VSSV., iii, 2, 110-15).

Withdrawal of mind from other objects, purity of body and mind, respect for a mantra, absence of mental agitation and self-abasement are the prerequisites for Japa. It should not be performed while lying, walking, eating, being angry, anxious, fatigued, or hungry. These restrictions should be observed in audible and slightly audible Japa. But there are no restrictions in mental Japa which may be performed in all places, and at all times, while walking, sitting, sleeping, or in a pure or impure state. One who performs mental Japa taking refuge in a mantra only acquires all the fruits of sacrifices. All the prescribed sacrifices and penances are not as efficacious as the sixteenth part of the sacrifice of Japa. Mental Japa is the best of the three kinds of Japa. (TS., pp. 31-32.)

Initiation in a mantra without Japa with faith and devotion is ineffective. Japa with mental concentration and meditation is necessary for rousing Kundalini from Her sleep and making Her pierce the six chakras. It destroys all sins, subdues passions, removes nescience, and hastens the dawn of the saving knowledge. It should be performed with the firm conviction that a Divine Name (nama) or a mantra is identical with Divine Mother and

made of pure consciousness. A mantra is a form and an emanation of the Divine Power, and Japa of it ultimately reveals its spiritual nature. Japa is the easiest and surest means of experiencing the Divine Power of pure consciousness and bliss and attaining the highest status. A mantra is not efficacious without Japa with meditation. Meditation also is not efficacious without Japa of a mantra. The repetition of Japa with meditation should be continued till the realisation of the Siva-Sakti is attained. The mind should be fixed on the pure consciousness of Divine Mother, and Japa should be performed, until the manas is dissolved in Her pure consciousness. The dissolution of manas is necessary for the realisation of Her. It depends upon extinction of primal nescience, attachment, desire, love and hate, and eradication of ego. (DG, V, 58-61, p. 194). Worship requires Japa. But it may be practised at other times (TVSD). Japa must be preceded by initiation.

A disciple should practise spiritual discipline by adopting the duties of a stage of life. Japa, worship and the like acts performed by a person, who is not properly initiated by a guru, never bear fruits, like seeds sown on a rock. So one should get oneself properly initiated with great care. One uninitiated never attains the fulfilment (siddhi) in spiritual discipline nor reaches the final destiny. Initiation destroys heinous sins and minor sins. An initiated person should repeatedly utter a mantra given by his guru in the morning, at noon, and in the evening a fixed number of times, e.g., a hundred and eight times, neither more nor less. (YHT., TS., p. 30.) Perform Japa with a concentrated mind, and reflect on the meaning of the mantra. Sit on even ground cross-legged with erect head wearing a cloth and covering the body with another upper cloth. The clothes should be pure and untainted with dirt and filth. The mind should be pure and not be diverted to any other object. Do not tell lies and crooked words; do not hear songs and music; do not attend dances; do not besmear your body with oil; do not use scents before, after or during ceremonial Japa. (YHT., TS., p. 31.)

Women need not observe any strict rule in performing Japa. They need not perform sacrifices or offer oblations to sacrifical fires. Men should offer such oblations one-tenth times they perform Japa of their mantras. Women's mantras beer fruits by means of Japa alone. (Viratantra, TS., p. 30.) All mantras lead an aspirant to self-fulfilment by the grace of Divine Mother. Men should perform a sacrifice (homa) after Japa, and tarpana after a sacrifice. A mantra bears the supreme fulfilment by such means. Tarpana is propitiation of a Deity by offering Her articles dear to Her. (Kulasara. TS., ch 1. 37-38) All the letters of a mantra should be distinctly uttered; no letter should be made short or long unduly; letters should not overlap one another. Aspirants following pasu disposition regard mantras as mere letters. But those following daiva disposition meditate on mantras, the letters of which are united with the power of Divine Spirit (cit-sakti). They show them the nature of their own selves as identical with Divine Power of Bliss permeating infinite ether. Mantras should be uttered with intellect as residing in the middle of Susumna, and their meanings should be reflected on again and again. Divine Consciousness ensouling mantras should be meditated on again and again. Japa requires single-mindedness, concentration, self-surrender, aspiration, and devotion. All vital forces should be harnessed to the performance of Japa; all mental energies; should be focussed on it; all- powera of an individual self, quiescent and dynamic, should be engaged in it. Mantras dovoid of the Divine Consciousness which is embodied in them are mere letters. Mantras with the Divine Consciousness embodied in them yield all kinds of fruits. (KNT. TS., p. 34.)

A Deity being pleased with a devotee for his repeated uttering of Her mantra bestows grace on him, and gives him enjoyments and liberation. All kinds of sacrifice (yajna) are not even sixteenth part of the sacrifice of Japa. (TS., p. 32.) Japa in the golden age is efficacious. It is twice efficacious in the silver age. It is thrice efficacious in the copper age. It is four times efficacious in the iron age. (Ibid., p. 30.)

The uttering of gayatri three thousand times a day for one month purifies a person of the sin of stealing gold, or of the sin of drinking wine. The Japa of gayatri three thousand times a day for a month purifies a sinner of the sin of adultery with his teacher's wife. The Japa of gayatri, three thousand times a day in a forest hut for a month purifies a sinner of sin of killing a Brahmana. The Japa of gayatri with breath-control and observance of silence three thousand times a day purifies a sinner of all sins. A persons with a sacred thread is purified of the sin of killing a cow by the Japa of gayatri three thousand times a day for twelve days. A sinner is purified of the sins of adultery, theft, killing, eating forbidden food and the like by the Japa of gayatri ten thousand times. (DB., Vol. II. pp. 421-22.) Gaytri is prayer: 'O Luminous Lord, Creator of fourteen worlds, Adorable, One! we pray to Thee. Do Thou direct our intellects.' All sins are destroyed by the Japa of one mantra ten thousand times. (TS., p, 3.) Japa should be preceded by breath-control three times and succeeded by three times. (GT., TS., p. 35.) Breath-control facilitates concentration of mind. Japa links the remembrance of the Divine to the rhythm of life. Breath-control again saturates life-energy with the consciousness of the Divine. Thus Japa purifies the mind and body, and makes them effective vehicles of divine consciousness. The Divine Mother is absolutory pure. She is embodied in Her mantras. Her nature, form or image, and mantras are identical with one another. Saivas, Saktas and Vaisnavas agree in this view.

Vaisnavas identify names of God also with Him. They are all made of divine consciousness and bliss. Rupa Goswami (1600 A.D.) identifies the Name of Krsna with Him. Both are perfect, pure and eternal. (HBRS., i, 11, 69.) His Name is self-minifest, and not perceptible by the tongue. Krsnadasa Kaviraja regards the Name of Krsna, and His nature, attributes and actions as composed of Divine consciousness and bliss. (CCA., ii, ch. 17). The Japa of a mantra of Krsna, or of the name of Krsna, the essence of all mantras, will liberate all from bondage to

transmigration. (Ibid., i, ch. 7.) It yields unmotivated and unconditioned love for God, absolute self-surrender to Him, and invokes His grace on a devotee. Bhagavatas regard the sacrifice of Japa as the best of all sacrifices. Krsna says, 'I am Japa-Yajna, sacrifice of Japa, among all kinds of sacrifice.' (BG., 10, 25.) Sacrifice of articles to a fire, sacrifice of meditation, sacrifice of the study of scriptures, and sacrifice of knowledge are mentioned. (Ibid., 4, 28.) Somananda (900 A.D.) a Saiva of Pratyabhijna school, regards Japa as supreme when an aspirant practises the consciousness 'I am' in all states - waking, dream, deep sleep, and trance - in the midst of the consciousness of all forms. (SD., 7; 84-86.) The Divine is infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Hence the Japa of a mantra embodying a Deity purifies, sanctifies, and spiritualizes an individual soul. The company of a saint purifies a soul, inclines it to God, generates love for Him, and fills it with His influence.

Divine Mother Herself bestows Her grace upon Her devoted child, takes him under Her protection and transmutes him into Her effective instrument, and a rediating centre of love. Her grace is infinite, and descends on Her loving and devoted child who yearns for Her love and grace. Japa as remembrance. Constant Japa is constent remembrance. It attunes Her Name to a devotee's rhythm of life. She becomes his life and soul. For him the entire universe becomes full of one Divine Mother.

CHAPTER V

SADHANA

AJAPA

Every person breathes 21,600 times in twenty-four hours, and unconsciously utters the mantra 'hamsa': 'ego is He'. Being instructed by an expert spiritual teacher, he directs the inhaled air through Susumna, and utters the rnantra 'So'ham': 'He I am' again and again. 'So'ham' is equal to 'sah'+'aham'. It is abbriviated to *Om* or Brahman. All is Brahman. 'I am Brahman'. There is identity between my finite soul and Supreme Self. The five contracting agents (kancuka) - kala, raga, niyati, kala and vidya - are dissolved by spiritual discipline, and the aspirant's soul is experienced as identical with Supreme Self. Saktism agrees with Pratyabhijna Saivism in regarding a liberated individual soul as identical with Supreme Self. Both consider the five contracting agents, which limit one infinite consciousness or Siva, and make Him atomic (anu). Rama Prasad, a devout Sakta, refers to ajapa, and turning natural breathing into Japa with every breath and linking the mantra 'So'ham' to the rhythm of life. This is a kind of Japa. Goraksanatha also enjoins ajapa on the Natha sect of Hindus.

YOGA

Saktism adopts the prartice of eightfold yoga for bringing on the union of the individual soul with the Divine Being. It takes 'yoga' in the sense of union of man with God, like the *Bhagavad Gita.* (DG., iv, 2, p. 190; ST., XXV, 1) Lust, anger,

greed, delusion, pride and envy, six passions, are the impediments to yoga. They can be conquered by the practice of yoga, which consists of restraint, observance, posture, breath-control, withdrawal of the sense-organs from their objects, fixation of mind at the centres of mystic consciousness, meditation on a Deity, and trance. Non-injury or non-killing, truthfulness, non-llieving, sex-restraint, compassion, simplicity, forgiveness, patience, temperance in eating, and cleanness are the ten restraints. Austerities, contentment, faith in God, charity, worship of a Deity, hearing the saving truth, moral reason, determination of duty, muttering a mantra or a divine name, and making oblations to a sacrificial fire, are the ten observances. There are various kinds of bodily postures. Breath-control consists in inhaling air, retaining it, and exhaling it, at the rate of 1: 4: 2. It should be attended with muttering a mantra or a divine name and meditation on the Divine Being. Pratyahara consists, in withdrawing the external sense-organs from their objects forcibly. It involves withdrawal of the manas also from them. Dharana consists in fixing the mind with the vital force at the centres of mystic consciousness on the Divine Power. Meditation consists in contemplation of the Divine Power uninterrupted by the thoughts of other objects. Trance consists in absorption of the individual self in the Supreme Self. (DG., iv, 3-8, 19, 20-21, 24-26, pp. 190-92; ST,. PD., XXV, 4-9, pp. 539-40).

There are many kinds of sitting (asana). (DG., 6.7). The padmasana, svastikasana, vajrasana, bhadrasana, and virasana are mentioned. (Ibid., 4; 8-14). Sit erect on a small square blanket with legs folded and crossed, and place the lower portion of the legs and feet on the thighs. This posture is called padmasana. Sit erect on a seat, place the left foot below, and place the right foot on the thigh of the left leg. This posture is called virasana. (GT., viii, ST., ii).

BREATH-CONTROL

Breath-control (pranayama) consists in inhaling air slowly

through Ida extending through the left nostril for sixteen seconds, retaining it in Susumna for sixty-four seconds, and exhaling it very slowly through the right nose for thirty-two seconds. Inhalation, retention, and exhalation should be in proportional - 1:4:2. Breath-control or breathing exercise should be practised every day for a certain period. The measure should be increased gradually. Breathing exercise may begin with 8: 32: 16, and increase to 12: 48: 24, and then to 16: 64: 32. (Ibid., 4; 15-18).

Then the sense-organs should be withdrawn forcibly from their objects and fixed on a desired object. The act of withdrawal is called pratyahara. (Ibid, 4; 21-22). Then the inhaled air (prana) should be fixed on some vital parts of the body such as the basic centre (muladhara), the navel centre, the heart centre, the eyebrow centre, and the highest centre above the cerebrum. The act of fixation is called dharana. (Ibid., 4; 22-24.) Then a yogin should meditate on the Patron Deity in his finite self in the heart-centre with a concentrated mind. Meditation is uninterrupted thought of Deity without any other thought (Ibid., 4; 24-25.) The mind resides completely within consciousness Of the Deity in meditation. Then trance (samadhi) results from continuous meditation. It is the union of the finite self and the Supreme Self. The finite self is absorbed in the Infinite Self in trance. It should be practised every day. (Ibid., 4; 25-26.) Thus yoga has eight parts: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. The *Devi Gita* mentions the eightfold yoga of Patanjali, but does not follow him by expounding their nature. Patanjali defines yoga as the restraint of the mental modes. But the *Devi Gita* defines it as the union of an individual self and the Supreme Self. Patanjali does not feel the necessity for it even for liberation, which is complete isolation of an individual self from prakrti and its products, the mind-body-complex.

Pranayama literally means restraint (ayama) of inhaled air

(prana). It is of two kinds: breath control accompanied with repeated utterance of a mantra and breath-control unattended with it. The former is better than the latter. The inpurities which veil the knowledge of the infinite Consciousness-Power, Sakti, are destroyed by breath-control. The Brahman is experienced through the practice of breath-control for one year. Practise breath-control uttering a mantra thirty-two times. (GT. ch. II.) It burns all sins, e.g. murder of a Brahmana, drinking liquor, adultery, killing a foetus or abortion and the like. Breath-control is an atonement for sinsa. (Ibid.) Press the right nostril with the thumb and inhale air through the left nostril, and press the left nostril with the little finger or the ring fingure and exhale the air through the right nostril. Do not use the forefinger and the middle finger. (JT., TT , pp. 549-50, 552.) Goraksanatha lays great stress on breath-control. Sri Aurobinda dispenses with it in integral yoga prescribed by him. A sinner is purified of all sins by the exercise of breath-control a hundred times in an appropriate manner. If a sinner practises Japa of gayatri a thousand times a day for a month in a forest hut after fasting, he is purified of all sins. The Japa of gayatri twenty-four thousand times is equal to a hard penance. The Japa of sixty-four thousand times is equal to Chandrayana vow. All sins are destroyed by the daily practice of Japa of gayatri in the morning, at noon, and in the evening with breath-control a hundred times while standing in water and meditating on gayatri in the form of the sun. (DB., vol. II, p. 423.).Gayatri mantra may be rendered into English thus: '0 luminous Lord adorable creator of the earth, heaven and the other worlds ! We pray to Thee. Do Thou direct our intellects.'

MEDITATION

The Supreme Self, Atman, Brahman, resides in the heart - other. The sound *Om* is Brahman. Pierce Brahman with the bow *of Om* and the arrow of the finite self. Meditate on Brahman *WI*th unswerving mind and self long throughout life. Brahman

is sure to be immediately experienced. One who meditates on the mystic sound *Om* will undoubtly intuit Brahman or Atman. Meditation on *Om* makes a seeker cross the ocean of maya. (DC, 5; 4-6, 9.) Divine Mother, Sakti, resides in the heart-lotus. She is in the nature of inexpressible form of pure consciousness (cit) and also beyond all forms. Brahma, Visnu, Rudra, Isvara, and Sadasiva reside at Her feet as five dead spirits (preta). They are dead because they are incapable of doing any thing without her power. Meditate on Her in the heart-lotus, then worship Her, and perform Japa of Her mantra. (Ibid., 9; 9-12.) Her real form is consciousness, devoid of any limiting condition (upadhi). So fix your mind on Her groundless form of consciousness. Meditate on of Her, Witness, Supreme Self, Atman, with a mind free of mental modes, and illumined by Yoga. (DG , 8; 44-46.)

Meditation is of two kinds: gross and subtle. Gross meditation is meditation on the external form of a Deity (e.g., hands, feet, belly, etc.) Subtle meditation is meditation on the subtle body of a Deity composed of mantras. It is full of knowledge. A worshipper is incapable of meditating on the subtle form of a Deity. So he should cultivate the habit of meditating on the external form of a Deity. Such meditation will lead him to liberation. A Deity worshipped, hymned, remembered, meditated on, or bowed to, leads a person to liberation. (Yamala, TT., pp. 495-96.) The *Devi Gita* defines meditation as contemplation of an adorable Deity in the self with a concentrated mind. Supreme Self, Atman, resides in the heart-ether. Meditate on *Om* as Atman. Meditation on *Om* will lead you to the Highest Good, beyond the darkness of maya. (DG., V, 9.) The worship of Sakti requires calmness, concentration of mind, Japa, meditation, taking refuge with Her, sacrifice, penance, charity and the like. (Ibid., viii, 9-11.) Meditation on the beautiful Divine Form of a Deity in the heart is indispensable for external and internal worship. (Ibid., ix, 15.) A Deity reflected in the heart should be worshipped, hymned, meditated on, bowed to, and surrendered

to. She is the form of a mass of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. That is the real nature of a Deity. The external form of earth, stone or a metal is a pale imitation of the real form of pure infinite consciousness. (Ibid., ix, 28-29, 32.) Both a mantra and a Deity are spiritual and replete with pure consciousness. A Deity is an aspect of the Divine. A person who is impure, and of unconcentrated mind is bound to transmigration. A person who it always pure and of concentrated mind attains to the Divinity. An aspirant should meditate on Atman, Supreme Self, by his finite self with a concentrated mind. Meditate on Divine Mother as Supreme Self, Witness, Universal Consciousness. (Ibid.,iii., 37-40.) Meditate on Her as infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss at the centre of the crown of the head, the thousand-petalled lotus (sahasrara), beyond all distinction or duality, and realize your identity with Her. (Ibid., iv, 48-49.) Meditation is preceded by fixation of vital energy on a vital part of the body (dharana) and concentration of mind. Meditate on a Deity adored by you in your finite self with a focussed and undiverted mind. It is always thinking of identiy of an individual self with Supreme Self. (Ibid., iv, 24-25.) An aspirant should meditate on Divine Mother as non-different from his finite self, as ubiquitous Light permeating all. He should meditate on his self as identical with Goddess, and on all things identical with Her, and on all states - waking, dream, deep sleep, and trance as full of one divine consciousness. One who worships Her and mediates on Her as of the nature of infinite bliss attains liberation, if he seeks for it. (GT., ch. 11; 6-10.) This is meditation in godly disposition (divyabhava). Somananda, a monistic Saiva, regards meditation as constant contemplation of all as Siva, one infinite being-consciousness-bliss, as consciousness of all as 'I am Siva'. (SD., 7; 78-80.) Bhagavatas also regard constant meditation on God as a means to the attainment of Him. (Bhag., x, 47; 34-36.)

Patanjali defines meditation as a stream of similar cognitions of an object uninterruped by the dissimilate cognitions of unlike

objects. (YS., iii, 2). Saktism inculcates meditation on Parama Siva or nondual absolute pure consciousness with the mind directed inward. Vijnanabhairava Bhattaraka describes meditation as contemplation which is partless, formless, and abodeless as distinguished from meditation on the form of a Deity possessed of a face, hands, etc. It is the continuous contemplation of the supremely lovable Divine Mother, Whose worship completely consumes the gross body, the subtle body, and the causal body of an embodied self (jiva), and who is nondifferent from Parama Siva (YHD., iii, 7, p. 196). Meditation, for Patanjali, is a means to the discriminative knowledge (viveka) of the individual self (purusa) as detached and absolutely different from the not-self or mind-body-complex which is a modification of prakrti (kaivalya). But, meditation, for Saktism, is a means to the union (yoga) of the individual soul with Siva-Sakti. It especially prescribes meditation on the Divine Being at the centres of mystic consciousness (chakra) in the human body, and meditation on a mystic diagram (yantra, Srichakra) which represents the Divine Being, the individual self, and the universe.

The effects of meditation on the Divine Being the different lotuses (chakra) are described in the following manner. Meditation on Him like a luminous fire at the Muladhara ultimately fulfils all desires. Meditation on Him at the Svadhisthana ultimately generates the power of attracting the whole world. Meditation on luminous Divine Power (Kundalini) at the Mampura ultimately generates all kinds of occult powers (siddhi). Meditation on the Divine Being at the Anahata ultimately generates the power of subduing all persons. Meditation on Him at the Visuddha makes an aspirant hear anahata sound. Meditation on Him at the Ajna like a flame of a lamp ultimately generates the power of an aspirant's all words coming true. Meditation on Him at the Sahasrara like a jet of smoke liberates an aspirant. Meditation on the Void (Sunya) at the Taluchakra at the upper end of the throat ultimately generates the dissolution of mind (chittalaya)

and the experience of a stream of bliss. Meditation on the Supreme Brahman at the Akasachakra above the Sahasrara ultimately gives an aspirant the saving knowledge that all is Brahman without distinction of subject and object. (SLU., p. 655).

Trance presupposes dissolution of mind (manopasa), desirelessness and egolessness. Trance is absorption of the mind in the Absolute. An aspirant should make his mind objectless. It can be made objectless if it is purged of all desires. A desireless mind only is objectless. Here 'desire' means desire for wealth, earthly or heavenly happiness, and virtue. It excludes desire for emancipation. Desire is the cause of bondage. Renunciation of desire is the cause of release. Hence desirelessness should be practised. Egoistic desire for happiness and altruistic desire for social good should be discarded, and only desire for emancipation from bondage should be cherished.

Desire springs from attachment to external objects. When attachment to them is destroyed, desire is destroyed. Attachment is the cause of bondage. Detachment is the cause of release. Extinction of attachment generates desirelessness. Desirelessness brings about dissolution of mind (chittalaya) and egolessness. A desireless mind becomes calm, tranquil, free, absorbed in contemplation of the Absolute. It can acquire the saving knowledge of the Absolute.

TRANCE (SAMADHI)

Trance is complete absorption of the mind in the object of contemplation, e.g., the Absolute or a symbol. There are two kinds of trance: (1) determinate (savikalpa) and indeterminate (nirvikalpa). The former takes the aid of determinations while the latter is free of determinations. They are of two kinds: known objects and (2) sounds or names. Objects are either physical objects or mental modes. Mergence of the mind in an empirical objeet (e.g., an idol) or in a mental mode (e.g , an image, or a concept) is determinate. In both the experience of one's self

depends upon the determination of a sound or an empirical object. Indeterminate trance is devoid of any thought of a name or a form. It is mergence of the mind in pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss or Supreme Self without any knowledge of distinction of self and God, which is a false appeareance. (SRU, op, cit, 25-33, pp. 647-48). It is devoid of undifferentiated Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The extinction of attachment and desire, the destruction of mind and ego, and the acquisition of the saving knowledge of the Absolute are interdependent and extremely difficult of attainment. These three should be cultivated simultaneously with patience, vigilance and perseverence.

Renunciation of desires restrains the agitation of the vital forces and brings about organic equlibrium which is conducive to mental equipoise. Mental equilibrium is nccessaiy for the contemplation of the Absolute. Hence love and hatred should be completely transcended, and perfect equality and equanimity should be sedulously cultivated. The tranquil mind purged of love and hatred, attachment, desire and egoism can contemplate and experience the pure transcendent Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the Absolute, Brahman, Atman, or Siva. (APU., op. cit, iii, 7, 46-48, 74-87., iv, 4-8, 102; pp. 499-504).

Mind is the cause of bondage and liberation. Bondage is attachment to objects. Liberation is detachment from them. An objeetless mind is conducive to release. When the *mind* detached from all objects is concentrated on the Supreme Self in the heart-lotus, it is finally dissolved. When the mind is destroyed, the Supreme Self alone shines. The mind and its modes are unreal appearances because they are different from Brahman. (YTU., op. cit., v, 1-5, pp. 540-41).

Mind tinged with conscious and unconscious desire (vasana) is conducive to bondage. Mind untainted by desire is conducive to emancipation. A desireless mind becomes inactive. Only the Absolute consciousness or will is active. A calm mind should meditate on this Truth. It should discard the thought of all other

objects and meditate on them as the Absolute consciousness or will. It should always abide in the pure infinite consciousness of the Absolute, whether it is in the waking state, dream, deep sleep, or trance. When it becomes completely pacified on the extinction of desires, it becomes fit for being absorbed in trance. So long as desires persist, the mind continues to be restless, fevered, and anguished, and the whole world appears to be aflame with fire. Hence desires should be weakened, rendered impotent, and then extinguished. When desires are emaciated, attachment, love, hatred, anger, joy, grief, and other emotions and passions are weakened. When the mind ceases to be swayed by emotions and passions, it becomes fit for meditating on the Absolute. Complete absorption of the mind is necessary for acquiring the intuitive experience of the Absolute. Merging in the Brahman is called higher wisdom (para prajna). It presupposes the destruction *of* mind, ego, attachment, love, hatred, and desire. In the state of egolessness, desirelessness. perfect equipoise, the spiritual body of the Divine Mother made of supreme bliss flashes forth, she is attained by destroying the mind with mind. Until the rrind is transcended, She cannot be attained. The intuitive sxperience of the Absolute consciousness and will is not discursive cnowledge or knowledge derived from the scriptures. (Op. cit., , 29-37, 41-54, pp. 494-96).

PENANCE (TAPAS)

Fasting on paticular occasions is observed as a penance. Ablution in a sacred river (eg., the Ganga, the Yamuna, etc.) on particular occasions (eg., solar eclipse, lunar eclipse, etc.) |s enjoined. Fasting is obligatory on the day when Divine Mother is worshipped until it is finished, and fast is broken by partaking of some food offered to Her. Penance is bodily vocal and mental. External worship of a Deity, showing respect to Master, wise persons, and Brahmanas, continence, non-injury, cleanliness and simplicity are bodily penances. Speaking the agreeable and wholesome truth and the study of the Vedas are vocal penances.

Self-control, tranquillity, purity of disposition, and silence are mental penances. Penances practised with strong faith without any desire for their fruits are actuated by sattva. Those practised for self-glorification or out of boastfulness are actuated by rajas. Those practised for self-torture or out of cruelty or malevolence are actuated by tamas. (BG., xvii, 14-19).

ESOTERIC CENTRES (CHAKRAS)

The Sakta Tantras generally mention six centres of mystical consciousness in Susumna in the spinal cord with Ida on the right and Pingala on the left. These are called Satchakra. Besides these there is Sahasrara or Brahmarandhra at the top of the head. They are not visible through a microscope on dissection. They are visible by the yogins through occult vision. They are not plexuses or ganglia in the autonomic nervous system. Bhaskararaya opines that they exist in the subtle body (linga sarira,) and that they are supported by Susumna. Sri Aurobindo is of the same opinion. (Y H S., p. 41; *More Lights on Yoga,* Pondichery, 1953, pp. 31-32).

(1) At the base of Susumna there is the Maladhara chakra of four yellow petals facing downward with the letters 'vam', 'Sam', 'sam', and 'sam' inscribed on them. This lotus is made of earth, and supported by an elephant. Kulakundalini, Divine Power or Mother, lies asleep coiled in three circles and a half like a red luminous serpent around Syayambhu linga. The opening of Chitrini nadi at the base of the linga is called the door of Brahman (brahmadvara). Divine Power or Mother ascends through it to the higher centres. She closes the door of Brahman through Her body. Sakti Sakini resides in the Maladhara as Her attendant. The lotus is situated between the anus and the base of the sexual organ. Divine Power is awakened by the practice of breath-control (pranayama) and concentration of the mind at this centre on Her for a long time. (2) At the base of the sexual organ and above the Muladhara lotus there is the Svadhisthana lotus of six white petals with the letters 'bam', 'bham', 'mam,

yam', 'ram', and 'lam', inscribed on them. This lotus is composed of water and supported by a white crocodile. Sivalinga resides in this lotus with Sakti Kakini. (3) At the base of the navel there is the triangular Mampura lotus of ten red petals with the letters 'dam', 'dham', 'nam', 'tam', 'tham', 'dam, 'dham', 'nam', 'pam', and 'pham', inscribed on them. Fire-God and Sakti Lakini reside in this lotus. It is composed of fire, and supported by a ram. (4) In the heart-cavity there is the hexagonal Anahata lotus of twelve smoky petals with the letters 'karri', 'kham', 'gam', 'gham', 'nam', 'cham', 'jam', 'jhem', 'nam', 'tarn', and 'tham', inscribed on them. This lotus is composed of air, and supported by a black antelope. The Patron Deity (istadevata) resides in it with Sakti Rakini, This is the seat of the Divine Being as the Supreme Self (paramatman) or the Inner Controller (antaryamin) and of the individual self (jivatman). The Divine Being as Paramatman is experienced here as the result of concentration of mind at this centre. The individual self as a transcendent being of pure consciousness also is experienced here. An unstruck sound (nada) also is heard here when the mind becomes calm and tranquil. (5) At the base of the throat there is the Visuddha lotus of sixteen blue petals with the letters

'am', 'am', 'im, 'im', 'um' 'um', 'rm' 'rrm', 'em', 'aim', 'om', 'aum', 'am', and 'ah' inscribed on them. Sivalinga resides in this lotus with Sakti Dakini. It is called the abode of the goddess of speech. It is composed of ether (akasa), and supported by a white elephant. The bijas 'lam', 'vam', 'ram', 'yam', and 'ham' of earth, water, fire, air, and ether, which constitute the Muladhara, the Svadhisthana, the Mampura, the Anahata, and the Visuddha lotuses, reside in them respectively. (DBU., p. 291; YTU., p. 331; MNTI). (6) Between the eyebrows there is the Ajnachakra of two yellow petals with the letters 'ham' and 'ksam' inscribed on them. It is composed of prakrti and manas composed of sattva, rajas and tamas. Sivalinga resides in it like a luminous lamp in a circular yoni with Sakti Hakini. It is the centre of occult vision. The Ajnachakra is so called because an aspirant receives

the command of the Master (guru), or Brahman here. (7) In the centre of the crown of the head above the cerebrum there is the Sahasrara lotus of a thousand petals with fifty letters mentioned above inscribed on them. In the centre there is a circle of effulgent light like millions of moons within which there is a triangle. Parama Siva and Primordial Divine Power (adya Sakti) reside here. This lotus is called Akula. Kulakundalini wakes up at the Muladhara, ascends, pierces all the lotuses, and is united with Parama Siva in the Sahasrara, Parama Siva is the Absolute with fully awakened infinite consciousness and bliss. The Saivas call this lotus the abode of Siva. The Saktas call it the abode of Devi or Divine Mother. The Vaisnavas call it the abode of Visnu or Radha-Krsna. Jiva Gosvami, a follower of Chaitanya, calls the Sahasrara the spiritual abode of Krsna, Vaikuntha or Goloka in the human body. Meditation on the Divine Being, Siva-Sakti, at this centre with Japa of a Divine name or mantra is enjoined by Saktism. This is the highest and most potent centre.

The *Jliilrnava Tantra* describes the six esoteric centres (chakra) in the following manner. In muladhara there are four petals. The letters va (व), *śa* (श), *ṣa* (ष), *sa* (स) are inscribed on them. In svadhisthana there are six petals. The letters *ba* (ब), *bha* (भ), *ma* (म), *ya* (य), *ra* (र), and *la* (ल) are inscribed on them. In mampura there are ten petals. The letters *da* (ड), *ḍha* (ढ), *ṇa* (ण), *ta* (त), *tha* (थ), *da* (द), *dha* (ध), *na* (न), *pa* (प) and *pha* (फ) are inscribed on them. In anāhata there are twelve petals. The letters, *ka* (क), *kha* (ख), *ga* (ग), *gha* (घ), *ṅa* (ङ), *ca* (च), *cha* (छ), *ja* (ज), *Jha* (ञ), *ña* (झ), *ṭa* (ट), *ṭha* (ठ) are inscribed on them. In viśūddha there are sixteen petals. The letters a (अ), *ā* (आ), *i* (इ), *ī* (ई), *u* (उ), *ū* (ऊ), ṛ (ऋ), ḷ (ऌ), *e* (ए), *ei* (ऐ), *o* (ओ), *ou* (औ), *am* (अं), *aḥ* (अः) are inscribed on them. In ajñā there are two petals. The letters *ha* (ह) and *kṣa* (क्ष) are inscribed on them. Fifty letters are inscribed on the petals of the thousand-petalled lotos. (TS., pp. 74-75.) These letters should be meditated on at different centres. The *Devi Gita* also assigns these letters

to the chakras. (DG., iv,34-35.) The petals of the muladhara lotus are yellow; those of svadhisthana lotus are white; those of manipura lotus are red; those of anahata lotus are smoky; those of visuddha lotus are blue; those of ajna lotus are white; those of sahasrara lotus are multicoloured. The *Devi Gita* describes the muladhara lotus as gold-coloured, the svadhisthana lotus as diamond coloured, the manipura lotus as the colour of bright cloud, the anahata lotus as the colour of a rising sun, and the visuddha lotus as of smoky colour. It describes the sahasrara lotus as the seat of Bindu or Siva, the ajna lotus as the seat of Atman, where an individual self gets a command from its teacher (guru), the visuddha lotus as the seat of an individual self which is purified by perceiving *hamsa,* its presiding Deity, the anahata lotus as the seat of Sabdabrahma where the unstruck subtle sound *Om* is heard, and the manipura lotus as the seat of Visnu, where an individual self can perceive Him. (DB. iv, 39, 41, 43, 44, 47.) The body is the temple of God; the finite self is its essence, SadaSiva. (KNT., 9, 42.) The Lord, Sadasiva, dwells in the inner heart of a jiva. The finite embodied self is the Lord, Sadasiva, limited by primal nescience (avidya), potencies of action (karma), egoism (ahamkara), and the triple body. Merits and demerits are the potencies of actions. They are destroyed by proper yogic discipline. There are many Deities (devata) in the body at different esoteric centres. Awaken and propitiate these Deities by arousing the dormant Divine Power (Kundalini Sakti), pushing Her through the intermediate centres to the highest centre above the cerebrum, called the thousand petalled lotus (sahasrara), and uniting Her with Siva, completely manifest Lord. (KNT, 6, 96.) The Deities are intermediate powers presiding over functions of the body and helping the jiva unite with the Lord. The body is a microcosm of the macrocosm, a miniature of the cosmos. This idea is expressed by Goraksanatha also in his doctrine of Siva-Sakti.

The *Saubhagya Lakshmi Upanisad* mentions taluchakra at

the root of the soft palate and akasachakra a little above the thousand petalled lotus. It calls bramharandhra nirvanachakra. A stream of nectar flows through taluchakra from above. If a yogin meditates on the Void (Sunya) there, his mind is dissolved. The highest akasachakra is a white lotus of sixteen petals facing upward. If a yogin meditates on Divine Power there, all his desires are fulfilled. (20; p. 655). It should be noted that Goraksnatha's account of nine chakras in the *Siddhasiddhantapaddhati* resembles this account.

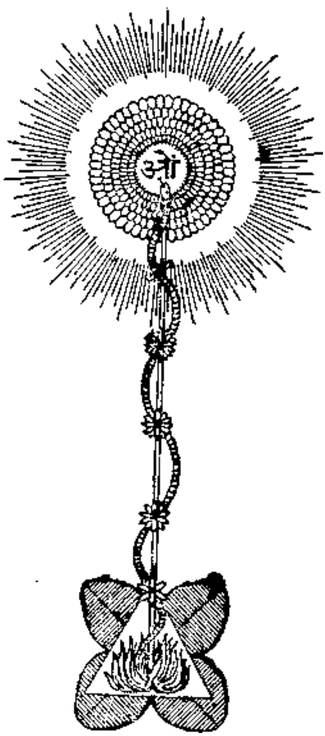
Patanjali and his followers do not mention the six chakras and Kuiidaliniyoga in the *Yoga Sutra* and its commentaries and subcommentaries. But Narayana Tirtha refers to six chakras with thair petals and letters inscribed on them and Kundalinil-yoga in the *Yogasiddhantachandrika*. (i, 39; pp. 38-41). At the thousand-petalled lotus there is the abode of Purusa, Siva, or Paramatman, Supreme Self. There is the abode of Ahamkara, egoism, in the centre of the forehead. Above it there is the abode of Buddhi, intellect. Above it there is the abode of Prakrti. Above it there is the thousand-petalled-lotus where Purusa or siva resides. (Ibid., p. 41.) It should be noted that Patanjali takes purusa in the sense of an individual self. Bat Narayaia Tirtha takes the word in the sense of Siva, Lord, Supreme Self. He takes prakrti endued with sattva, rejas and tamas in the sense of Sakti, Divine Power. All objects are produced out of the stuff of Prakrti and Purusa, Siva and Sakti. (Ibid, p. 39.) Patanjali does not advocate this view. Purusa and Prakrti are heterogeneous in nature and can never mix together and form objects.

The present author has shown elsewhere that though Samkara did not distinctly refer to six chakras and Kundalini-yoga anywhere in his writings, his followers knew the esoteric centres and practised Kundaliniyoga. Nnsimha Saraswati distinctly mentions Kundaliniyoga, rousing the dormant Divine Power at the basic centre, making Kundalini ascend through the abdonimal centre, the navel centre, the heart centre, the throat centre, the eye-

brow centre, raising Her to the thousand-petalled centre at the top of the head, and uniting Her with Supreme Self, Brahman. A soul experiences the bliss of the Brahman by uniting with the Supreme Self there. (HIP., Vol. Ill, pp. 361-62). *Kundaliniyoga in Advaita Vedanta, Chakra,* Vol. 4, New Delhi, 1972.) Samkara regards the heart-cavity as the abode of Inner Akasa or Brahman. The Brahman should be meditated on as the Inner Light of Consciousness at the heart-centre. An individual soul that has acquired the knowledge of Brahman, and realized its identity with the Brahman departs through brahmarandhra. Samkara regards the eye-brow centre as an esoteric centre where the Brahman should be meditated on. But he does not distinctly refer to Kundalini and Her union with Siva, the Lord. Siva as Lord is imagined by avidya, and an appeararce. Sakti is an appearence due to maya.

Chandldasa, a great Vaisnava poet of Bengal before Chaitanya, mentions these seven chakras. A Vaisnava Samhita calls Radha Kulakundalini. Radha leaves Muladhara called Kula to meet Krsna in the Sahasrara called Akula. Saivism also accepts the seven chakras. Kabir, a follower of Ramananda, mentions the chakras, Triveni, Susumna, and anahata sound in his poems. All cults of Hinduism inculcate meditation on Patron Deity (ista devata) in the heart-lotus. The earliest Upanisads enjoin meditation on Brahman as 'Aum' or 'Om' in the heart-ether. Hence Kandaliniyoga or Sat-chakra-sadhana was known to the principal cults of Hinduism. It is a form of inner worship of the Divine Being as distinguished from external worship of an Idol. It is a form of individual worship as contrasted with corporate worship. Rama Prasada refers to the Divine Mother or Kundalini residing in the chakras or lotuses with letters inscribed on them, and to meditation on Her at these centres in several songs Sri Aurobindo made these chakras the bases of his integral yoga. (Arthur Avalon, Introduction, "Tantra of Great Liberation"; TS., p. 75; SS, YH., YHD., i, 25-26, pp. 36-41; YHS., pp. 41-43;

"Serpent Power," 1953, p. 161; SLU., p. 655; YSU.. pp. 463 & 467; YCU., pp. 339-40; Chandidasa, Padavali, Calcutta, 1340, Bangabda, pp. 161-62; Kabir Granthavali, Kasi, pp. 81, 84, 125, 136-37 & 248; "Lights on Yoga," Pondichery, 1953, pp. 18-19, 26-31; *Samksepa-Vaisnava-tosam* on the *Bhagavata,* ii, 1, 28; X, 87, 18)



SEVEN CHAKRAS

The four petals of the Muladhara chakra are the seats of four kinds of bliss-supreme bliss (parananda), innate bliss (sahajananda), yogic bliss (yogananda), and a hero's bliss (virananda). The six petals of the Svadhisthana chakra are the seats of credulity, cruelty, mistrust, disdain, delusion, and false

knowledge. The ten petals of the Manipura chakra are the seats of laziness, craving, envy, dullness, shame, fear, delusion, dejection, disgust, and wickedness. The twelve petals of the Anahata chakra are the seats of greed, insincerity, indecision, regret, hope, anxiety, endeavour, the sense of 'mine', arrogance, languor, discrimination, and egoism. The sixteen petals of the Visuddha chakra are the seats of 'hum', 'phat', 'vasat', 'svadha', 'svaha', 'namah', nectar, seven musical notes - nisada, nisabha, gandhara, sadaja, madhyama, dhaivata, and panchama, 'om', and udgitha. (PD., XXV, 97, p. 550, TVSD.)

The Sakta Tantras regard the Muladhara chakra as the seat of the individual self (jivatman) and the Supreme Self or Siva. i Its four petals are the seats of four kinds of bliss. Innate bliss is the natural bliss of the individual self. Yogic bliss is due to meditation on the Divine Being. A hero's bliss is due to complete self-mastery. Supreme bliss is Divine bliss experienced by an individual self in an advanced state of Tantric sadhana. The heart-lotus also is the seat of the individual self and the Supreme Self. The Ajnachnakra is the seat of Sadasiva, wherein the mind is dissolved and super-consciousness (unmani) is experienced. It is the abode of uninterrupted bliss. The Sahasrara is the seat of Parama Siva with His Divine Power, where He reveals Himself to an aspirant in His full glory. (IPEW., pp. 9-10; cp. "Lights on Yoga," pp. 17-18, 52-54, 66-68). All the lotuses are centres of mystic consciousness. Divine Power and Consciousness are dormant in them and can be roused and liberated by concentration at them on the Divine Being. They are centres of different kinds of mystic consciousness.

Ramakrsna Paramahamsa mentions seven chakras, which are he centres of concentration of mind. The three lower centres, muladhara, svadhisthana, and manipura, are concerned with twoman and wealth' or worldly affairs. At the heart-centre, anahta, Divine Light is seen as the result of concentration. This vision draws the mind away from worldly affairs. At the throat-

centre, visuddha, nescience (avidya) is partially removed, and the mind delights in thoughts and talks of God only. At the eye-brow centre, ajna, the Divine Light is visioned always, but ego is not completely eradicated. At the Sahasrara centre there is direct intuition of the Brahman in a state of trance (samadhi) when there is complete eradication of ego (aham). There is the direct experience "I am Brahman". But this state of Identity-consciousness does not continue long. So the mind oscillates between the highest centre and the eye-brow centre in order to retain a certain degree of duality-consciousness which is sustained by devotion. (Kathamrta, i, pp. 71-73 & 92; S. B, Das Gupta, Bharater Sakti - sadhana o Sakta sahitya, Calcutta, Bengali year 1367, pp. 282-83).

Sri Aurobindo gives the following account of the chakras. The muladhara governs the physical; the svadhisthana governs the lower vital; the mampura governs the larger vital; the anahata governs the emotional mind; the visuddha governs the expressive mind; the ajna governs the dynamic mind; the sahasrara governs "the higher thinking mind," "the illumined mind," and "the Overmind". ("Lights on Yoga," pp. 18-19). The Overmind is the passage from Mind to Supermind. (Ibid, p. 34). The ajna is the centre of "the inner mind, of occult vision." At the Muladhara Kuiidalini Sakti or Yoga-Sakti is coild up and asleep as in the other centres. But at the Sahasrara "the Divine Force is awake, scient, potent, extended and wide". (Ibid, pp. 17 & 67). "In the heart-centre one concentrates in an aspiration, for an opening, for the presence of the living image of the Divine there". (Ibid, pp. 67-68). "Spiritual peace and silence, the Light, the Power, the Knowledge, the Ananda come from above". (Ibid, p. 53). The functions of the centres from the base are (1) commanding the physical consciousness, (2) commanding little greeds, lusts and desires, (3) commanding the larger life-forces, passions and desires, (4) commanding the emotional mind, the psychic being, (5) commanding expressions of mind, (6)

"commanding thought, will and vision, and (7) commanding the higher thinking mind, the illumined mind and opening to the Overmind" ("More Lights on Yoga," p. 35; Ibid, p. 31 & 34).

SRICHAKRA

Bhaskararaya enjoins meditation on Srichakra above the Ajnachakra. (YHS., p. 43). The *Tripuratapinit Upanisad* describes Srichakra in the following manner. It consists of three triangles with vertices downwards and three triangles with vertices upwards, the latter intersecting the former. They are situated within concentric circles. There are eight petals outside the first-circle. There are sixteen petals outside the second circle. The outermost circle is placed within a square with four openings in the four directions, (Op. cit., p. 536 & diagram, preface; CHI., Vol II, first edition, pp. 186-87). Srichakra is called a yantra. It is a mystic diagram which represents the universe - the manifestation of Siva-Sakti. It is worshipped either externally like an Image or mentally through meditation. Both kinds of worship of a yantra lead to the fulfilment (siddhi) of Tantric sadhana.

The Bhavana Upanisad regards the human body as Srichakra, and enjoins the inner worship of it, which is explained below. Various kinds of yantras are described by the Sakta Tantras. The *Yoginihrdaya* describes Srichakra in the following manner. It consists of nine triangles. Five triangles have their vertices downwards; four triangles have their vertices upwards. They intersect each other, and form the Navayoni chakra. The elements of it are Dharma, Adharma, Atman, Antaratman, Paramatman, Jnanatman, Jiva, objects of knowledge, and valid knowledge. It is really pure consciousnes (chit) and bliss (ananda), within and without, and unlimited by time, space and form. The Baindava Chakra is the inner while ninefold (navayoni) chakra is the outer. The latter is composed of the Vaikahari Matrika (letters) only. The inmost or Baindava chakra represents Mahabindu - the equilibrium of Siva and Sakti. Its three sides

consist of the vowels 'a', 'a', 'i', 'I', 'u', 'u', 'r', 'li', 'lli', 'e', 'ai', 'o', 'au', and 'am' and its centre is the vowel 'ah'. Siva (Kamesvara) and Sakti (Kamesvari) are its presiding Deities seated on Mahabindu or Sadasiva. Srichakra is a mystic diagram of the Supreme Divine power expressed in the causal, subtle, and gross universe. (YH., YDH., YHS., i, Introduction, pp. x-iii; TVSD.)

PASU, VIRA AND DIVYA DISPOSITIONS

Men are divided into three types according to their dispositions (bhava): (1) the pasu (animal), (2) the hero (vira), and (3) the godlike (divya). Inertia (tamas) is predominant in the first, on which energy (rajas) operates; energy is predominant in the second which operates on essence (sattva); essence is predominant in the third, which preponderates over inertia and energy. Inertia or darkness (tamas) is the cause of ignorance, delusion, negligence, indolence, and sleep. Energy (rajas) is the cause of love, attachment, craving, and action. Essence (sattva) is the cause of knowledge and pleasure. Desire, anger, grecd, and pain spring from energy. (BG., xiv, 6-9, 12-13, 16-17). A pasu lives on the plane of ignorance, duality and plurality. He does not regard an Image as a Deity, a Master as an instrument of Divine Power, a mantra as charged with spiritual power and identical with a Deity, and distinguishes between different Deities. He is not permitted to worship the Divine Mother with fish, meat, parched cereals, wine and sexual union. He worships Her with their substitutes, viz., egg-fruit, red radish, masur, (a kind of pulse), or red sesamum for fish; ginger, wheat, beans, or garlic for meat; rice, wheat, or grain for parched cereals; milk, ghee or honey for wine and he meditates on Her feet in lieu of sexual union. He is engaged in the performance of customary religious rites of little spiritual significance and the observance of vows performed by common people. He is ignorant of the real meaning of Tantric rites. (YH., YHD., iii, 191, pp. 332 & 334; YHS., ii, 43, p. 142). He follows the Vedic rules (vedachata).

A hero (vira) is restless, active, arrogant and excitable due to the excess of energy (rajas) acting on essence (sattva). He has subdued his passions, controlled his sense-organs, acquired self-command, purity and strength of character, and is therefore permitted by the Sakta Tantras to worship the Divine Mother with fish, (matsya), meat (mamsa), parched cereals (mudra), and Wine (madya). Generally worship with sexual union (maithuna) is forbidden. In exceptional cases of spiritual advancement a hero is permitted to worship Her with sexual union with his wife for the conquest of the sex-instinct and carnal desire. These articles of enjoyment are offered to the Divine Mother with repetition of mantras and worship of Her in order to purify and sublimate them and transform the instinctual life of enjoyment (pravrti) into the spiritual life of renunciation (nivrti). A hero sacrifices 'thisness' (idanta) to the 'I-ness' (ahanta) - 'this'-eonsciousness to the 'I'-consciousness - in the battle of life, experiences his nature as a transcendent spirit, and destroys all evils. He has acquired the knowledge of the secret of a mantra of the Divine Mother. He worships Her with the five articles (pancha-tattva) in the company of a hero. He does not worship with them in the company of an animal (pasu). (YHD i, 65-66, p. 76; YH., ii, 1, p. 90; YH., YHD., iii, 191, p. 332). He habitually lives a virtuous life, but experiences that virtue and vice are the beautiful and distorted expressions of the Divine Power. He partially transcends duality and distinction.

A godlike (divya) person is possessed of a sattvika disposition. He is self-restrained, tranquil, silent and inactive. He is truthful, compassionate, respectful to all women as manifestations of the Divine Mother, and benevolent to all creatures as Her expressions, and thinks the universe to be permeated by Her. He has firm faith in the Vedas and the Agamas, his Master, mantra, tutelary Deity, and Image or mystic diagram (yantra). He worships Her thrice daily, performs Japa at night, and offers every thing to Her. He does not make any distinction between one Deity (eg., Kali) and another (eg., Krsna), and regards all Deities as aspects

of the Divine Mother or Siva-Sakti. (IMNT., pp. lxv-lxxi). He transcends the distinction of virtue and vice as constructions of the human mind and social conventions, and practises Tantric yoga, and worships the Divine Mother with breath-control, concentration, meditation, trance, and rousing Kula-kundalini and making Her pierce the six centres of mystic consciousness (chakra) and uniting Her with Parama Siva in the Brahmarandhra (cp. op. cit). He is an eater of fish in the sense that be equilibrates inhalation and exhalation, which are the fishes moving about in Ida and Pingala, and that he retains the vital force in Susumna and thereby brings about organic equilibrium conducive to mental concentration. He is an eater of meat in the sense that he completely controls his tongus and restraine his speech. He is truthful, sweet-tongued, and reserved in speech. He is an eater of parched cereals in the sense that he has acquired the right knowledge of Parama Siva united with Mahakundalini at the Sahasrara lotus. He is a drinker of wine in the sense that he drinks the stream of nectar which flows from the Sahasrara lotus, and is intoxicated with it. He is a true performer of sexual union in ths sense that he has acquired the knowledge of Siva-Sakti by uniting the bija 'ra' in the Manipura lotus with the bija 'ma' in the form of a point (bindu) in the Ajnachakra through inhalation and exhalation (ajapa) which are in the form of 'a'. To be firmly established in such knowledge attended with supreme bliss is the real act of sexual union. (Hathayogapradipika & Agamasara). A godly aspirant is an adept in meditation on the Divine Mother at the centres of mystic consciousness, and experiences Her in them and the universe. He transcends the plane of duality and distinction, and partakes of Her supreme undifferentiated consciousness and delight. He dissolves his mind, eradicates his ego (aham), and annuls the world of phenomenal appearances (idam). He harmonises and synthesises duality and distinction in unity, and attains the fulfilment (siddhi). He acquires the integral knowledge and the intuitive experience. Saktism is the practical science of attaining the Advaita Vedanta

knowledge and Absoluteness (Sivatva). It is sheer nonsense and gross perversion of the truth to brand it as gross egoistic hedonism or unrestrained sensualism. Rama Prasada, Ramakrsna Paramahamsa, Bama Ksepa, and other Sakta saints attained God-realisation through the Sakta cult of spiritual discipline. Sri Aurobindo based his Integral Yoga on the cult, adapted, simplified and rationalised it for the upliftment of humanity to the supramental level. ("Bases of Yoga", 1973, pp. 143, 89.)

In the intermediate plane of the cult of the worship of Sakti, an aspirant eats fish and meat and drinks a little wine. But one who merely eats fish is a killer of living animals. But a yogin who brings all his senses under his control and utilizes them for concentration of his mind on the Supreme Self, Atman, and for meditation on It, is a true eater of fish. (KNT, 5, 110. GT., p. 84.) A true worshipper of Sakti is a master of his senses, and does not eat fish for the gratification of his sense-desires arid for the enjoyment of his sense-pleasures. Saktism inculcates complete mastery over the senses, and non-attachment or detachment in enjoyment. It aims at harmony of enjoyment with renunciation. In the cult of Sakti-worship a yogin rouses the coiled or dormant Divine Power (Kundalini) at the basic centre (muladhara), pushes Her upward, through the intermediate centres, and unites Her with Siva, the full Moon of Divine Consciousness, Divine Spirit completely awake and manifest at the highest centre above the cerebrum, and drinks the nectar flowing from the union. This nectar is true wine that a yogin drinks in the cult of Sakti-worship. He should not drink the ordinary intoxicating liquor. (KNT., 5; 111-12.) If a person attained to the fulfilment or the realisation of Divine Spirit by drinking wine, then all low and vulgar persons addicted to wine would attain the fulfilment. (KNT., 2, 117. GT., p. 91.) The Yogic discipline would not be necessary to it. Drunkenness and intoxication are inimical to complete self-control, concentration and meditation and conducive to dissipation and abandonment to low sensual pleasures. Drunkeness and licensciousness go together. Saktism is the

antithesis of intoxication and uncontrolled sex-indulgence. It is sense-conquest and mastery over sex-desire. Unawakened Divine Power in human body is animal power; but coiled Divine Power is awakened in a worshipper of Sakti called a Kaulika. He is the true worshipper of Sakti, who rouses dormant Divine Power (Sakti) and effectively unites Her with Siva at the highest centre, and who drinks the nectar of bliss flowing from the union of Sakti with Siva. This act of union of Sakti with Siva by yoga is called true congress (maithuna). Others who indulge in sexual congress with women are slaves of sex-desires, animal passions. (KNT, 111-12. GT., p. 85.) In the cult of Sakti-worship a knower of yoga kills the animal of merits (punya) and demerits (papa). The *Vijaya Tantra* says, 'Delighting in the intuitive knowledge of the immutable and immaculate Supreme Brahman is drinking wine. Sex-union is the union of Kulakundalini Sakti, coiled Divine Power in the human body, with Siva'. *(Tantra-Katha Visvabharati*, p. 19.) The action which gives the intuitive experience of the Divine Mother (mam) is eating meat. (Ibid.) According to the *Nirvana Tantra,* a Sakta should not eat fish, meat, and parched rice, drink wine, and indulge in sexual congress (panchamakara), but should knew five tattvas - the essence of Guru, the essence of a Mantra, the essence of a Deity, the essence of a letter, and the essence of meditation. According to Laksmidhara, the Samayacharins do not perform external worship of a Deity, do not mutter mantras repeatedly, and do not offer oblations to a sacrificial fire. *(Tantra Katha,* p. 29.) In the lowest stage of spiritual discipline eating fish, and meat, drinking wine, and sex-intercourse are strictly forbidden. When an aspirant has conquered his sense-organs and passions, he is eligible for the second stage of a hero's worship. He is allowed to eat fish and meat, drink wine, and indulge in sex-union with his wife with perfect devotion to God and detachment. A person endowed with an excess of *tamas* is eligible for worship of the lowest type. One endowed with an excess of *rajas is* eligible for worship of the mediocre type. A yogin endowed with an

excess of *sattva* is eligible for worship of the highest type. When he conquers all gunas, he is eligible for the knowledge of the Brahman. A person of godly disposition should not meditate on a Deity as different from his self. He knows 'I am Brahman', and is absolved from all sins. In the lowest form of worship a devotee meditates on a gross Image of a Deity. In the mediocre form of worship a devotee meditates on an Image as mixed with lustre, or on a Supreme Light mixed with a colour. In the best form of worship a devotee meditates on the Supreme Self as full of effulgent light. (Bhavarahasya, Ch. Xll, *Sakta Darsana*, Calcutta, 1970, pp. 123-24.) The intuitive experience of the Brahman arises from the permanent union of Kundalini with Siva at the highest centre. (Agamasara, Ibid, p. 128.)

WORKS

The worship of Sakti is grounded on the bed-rock of a virtuous life. Moral restraints and moral observances stated under yoga are virtues. They should be cultivated by a worshipper of Sakti. The performance of prescribed duties purifies the mind, and prepares it for acquiring the saving knowledge. Actions are due to desires. Desires are due to nescience (avidya). When nescience is destroyed, love and hate are destroyed, and actions motived by them are destroyed. Righteous acts are favourable to the emergence of knowledge. Emotional complexes, heart-knots, are destroyed by knowledge. Modern psychoanalysts also confirm this view. Sense-restraint, mind-control, endurance of joy and grief, and detachment from sense-pleasure, arise from purity of mind. Control emotions and passions due to tamas and rajas. Righteous life conquers rajas and tamas, and increases sattva. Sattva generates knowledge and virtue. (DG., 3; 6-8, 10-13, 15-16.) Lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and envy are conquered by the practice of yoga. (Ibid., 4; 3-5.)

The offering of all prescribed works, moral and religious acts, to Divine Mother purifies a devotee from sins. (DG, 6, 8). Pilgrimage to holy places and holy shrines for the devotees

of Divine Mother increases devotion. Baidyanatha, Kamakhya, Pushkara, Kedarnath, Gaya, Kankhal, KashI, Kanchi, Kurukshetra, Srinagar, Hingula, Vindhychala, and the like are holy places for the Saktas. Kashi is the holiest place. One who worships Goddess there every day with devotion, and performs Japa of Her mantra and meditates on Her every day is liberated from bondage. (Ibid., 7; 5-34.) Those who eschew all primal desires - desire for sons, desire for wealth, desire for power, and desire for earthly or heavenly happiness and take refuge with Divine Mother with compassion for all creatures, with life and mind fixed on Her, being devoid of egoism and pride, being always engaged in conversation about Her, and who worship Her every day with devotion, whether they are students, or house-holders, or hermits, or ascetics, receive Her grace. She destroys their ignorance due to tamas, and grants them the saving knowledge. (DG., 8; 34-37.) Divine Mother grants happiness in heaven or liberation to Her devetee, who takes refuge with Her. *(Chandi.,* 13, 5.) She is the Saviour of the destitute and distressed who take refuge with Her. (Ibid., 11, 12.) The worship of Divine Mother requires not only the offering of all works to Her but also the offering of one's body, wife, children, wealth and property, - entire being, to Her. (DG., 9, 26.) Body and self both should be dedicated to the Divine. One should refrain from thinking about maintaining one's body after dedicating it to God, even as a seller of an animal does not think of its maintenance after selling it. *(Bhaktiviveka,* BhS., 308.) Chanting hymns, singing holy names, dancing before a Deity, walking round a temple, feeding holy men after worship, joining a procession carrying a Deity in order to show reverence to Her, distributing the food offered to Her in worship to all persons present, and the like should be performed. (DG., 6; 23-24, 9; 21-24, 27.)

Works alone cannot lead to the attainment of the Divine Being. They are the duties (dharma) enjoined by the scriptures. The Vedas are the commands of the Divine Mother. The Smrtis

conform to the Vedas. They are authoritative, and the duties inculcated by them are obligatory, because they embody the wisdom of the omniscient and omnipotent Divine Mother, and because they are not tainted with nescience (ajnana). The other scriptures being tainted with nescience are not authoritative, and hence their injunctions are mere semblances of duties. The persons desirous of liberation should always perform the duties enjoined by the Vedas and the Smrtis in harmony with them. The other scriptures which are repugnant to them are motivated by tamas, and should be discarded. The portions of the Saiva, Vaisnava, Saura, Sakta and Ganapatya scriptures which are concordant with the Vedas should be followed, and those which are discordant with them should be discarded. (DG., viii, 13-21, 25-27, 30-31).

J The performance of duties enjoined by the Vedas purifies the mind. Hence they should be performed carefully until sense-control (dama), mind-control (sama), endurance (titiksa) of pleasure and pain, and detachment due to the excess of sattva are acquired. When these virtues are acquired, a person should resort to a teacher who is firm in the pursuit of Brahman, hear the instructions of the Vedanta regardirig the identity of the individual self and Brahman, and reflect upon them. (DC, iii, 15-19). The duties called restraints (yama) and observances (niyama) discussed under Yoga should be performed. Sense-control (dama), mind-control (Sama), endurance (titiksa) of pleasure and pain, withdrwal of mind and sense-organs from wordly pleasures (uparati), dispassion for earthly and heavenly happiness (vairagya), and desire for liberation (mumuksa) should be cultivated. (DG., vii, 40). Oblations to a sacrificial fire, penance, and charity should be performed for the pleasure of the Divine Mother. Boastfulness, egoism, cruelty, hypocrisy, envy, conceit, arrogance, and other vices should be exterminated. Primal egoistic desires (esana) should be eradicated. Compassion for all creatures should be cultivated. Daily obligatory duties (nitya karma) and occasional duties (naimittika karma) and vows (vrata) and festivals relating

to the worship of the Divine Mother should be performed. (DG., vi, 4-5, 21.23, viii, 11 & 34).

Nescience (ajnana) of the real nature of the individual self as eternal Spirit is the cause of desire (kama). Desire is the cause of action (karma). Hence action or performance of duties cannot bring about liberation. True knowledge (jnana) of the individual self as the Divine Being alone can destroy nescience (ajnana), which is the cause of desire and action. Works (karma) are necessary for purifying the mind. A pure mind alone can acquire the saving knowledge. Works are aids to knowledge. Knowledge destroys avidya called a knot of the heart. Nescience is the cause of action. Thus knowledge and works being opposed to each other cannot coexist. Knowledge is like light. Works are like darkness. Light and darkness cannot coexist with each other. Hence works alone or combined with knowledge cannot lead to liberation. True knowledge alone is the means to release. (DG, iii, 6-8, 11-14.) This is the view of Samkara also.

Nescience is the cause of egoism, the false sense of 'I' and 'mine'. Egoism is the cause of attachment. Attachment is the cause of desire. Desire is the cause of action. It is painful. It is a state of tension between a feeling of want and anticipated satisfaction. Pleasure is the consequerce of a fulfilled desire. But when one desire is gratified, another desire springs up, and produces an effort to fulfil it. Thus pain produces pleasure, and pleasure produces pain. The cycle continues for ever. Love, hate, anger, envy, delusion, pride and the like all spring from attachment and egoism due to nescience. Until nescience is destroyed by true knowledge, bondage cannot be destroyed. (DG., iii, 8-10).

DEVOTION (BHAKTI)

The way of devotion (bhaktiyoga) is easy to follow because it is mental and because it does not entail any torture of the body and the mind. Devotion is of three kinds according as it is prompted by tamas, rajas and sattva. (1) Devotion prompted by anger, envy, boastfulness and cruelty is motivated by *tamas*.

It is called *tamasa* devotion. (2) Devotion prompted by the desire for one's own good, eg., renown, happiness, etc., and expressed in the worship of the Divine Mother for the attainment of egoistic ends, and devoid of the oppression of others is motivated by rajas. It is called *rajasa* devotion. It is attended with the knowledge of difference between oneself and others. (3) Devotion Consisting in the offering of one's works to God, enjoined by th Vedas, with the determinate knowledge that they are obligatory duties is prompted by *sattva.* It is called *sattvika* devotion. It is attended with the knowledge of difference and contributory :to supreme devotion. *Rajasa* devotion is prompted by egoistic desire *(sakama)* for ends. *Sativika* devotion is actuated by the sense of duty. Both are attended with the knowledge of difference. *Tamasa* devotion ond *rajasa* devotion do not lead to the supreme devotion. (4) Supreme devotion (para bhakti) consists in hearing he qualities of the Divine Mother, chanting Her names, and uninterrupted concentration of mind on Her, the abode of excellent qualities, without any desire for liberation in the form of proximity :to Her (samipya), union with Her (sayujya), residence in Her abode (salokya), or enjoyment of Her lordship (sarsti), prompted by the desire of serving Her alone. It is not actuated by the desire for liberation, because a devotee has the only desire to serve Her. *(Bhagavata.)* Supreme devotion culminates in passionate love (prema) and supreme attachment (paranurakti) or intimate affection. It is characterised by the sense of 'mine' which ultimately results in the abolition of the sense of difference between a devotee and the Divine Mother. The individual soul is lost in Her. The relation of 'I' and 'Thou' vanishes. Either bf he two remains. Thus supreme devotion is finally characterised by the sense of nondifference or identity between an individual soul and the Divine Mother, and between oneself and others. Good will and compassion for all, equality, non-injury and the like virtues are the concomitants of such devotion. Faith, hearing the scriptures, pilgrimage to holy places, muttering of mantras and names of the Divine Mother, rapture, shedding tears, faltering

voice, etc., in chanting Her names or hymns, and worshipping Her with undivided love are the expressions of this highest devotion. (D.G., vi, 2-21, pp. 197-99). A devotee's mind is dissolved in the Divine Mother, Who is of the nature of pure consciousness only, in the state of supreme devotion. It is purged of egoism - the sense of 'I' and 'mine' - and of false identification of the self with the body. It becomes independent even of the body. No thought of maintaining the body torments it. It entrusts even the maintenance of the body to the Divine Mother. It is filled with the thought of Her alone, permeated by Her consciousness, and cannot cherish any other thought. Such a devotee entrusts himself completely to the Divine Mother, and She takes charge of him. Supreme devotion is accompanied with supreme detachment. The perfection of supreme devotion is called the saving knowledge (jnana). An aspirant who has attained true knowledge attains embodied release. He does actions only under the influence of *prarabdha* karma, goes to the abode of the Divine Mother after death, experiences all objects of enjoyment, acquires the true knowledge of Her as pure consciousness, and is then emancipated from bondage. (DG, vi., 24-31, pp. 199-200). This account of devotion is similar to the Vaisnava account. (HBRS., i, ch., 34, BS., 257-287).

The great Saktas, Rama Prasada and Rama Krsna Paramahamsa, laid great stress on devotion, self-surrender, self-dedication, taking refuge in the Divine Mother, and craving for Her grace for attaining beatitude. Perhaps they were influenced by Chaitanya's cult of devotion and desireless undivided love for God. These elements of devotion are found in Saktism as preached by the *"Chandi"* and the *"Devi Gita"*. But in the Sakta Tantras mystic rites, yoga, and knowledge are emphasised, though devotion is inculcated. Rama Prasada attempted a synthesis of works (karma), meditation (yoga), and knowledge (jnana) with devotion (bhakti). He preferred union with Divine Mother (sayujya) without losing his soul's identity to complete extinction of self in the Absolute (nirvana). He preferred devotion

and love for Divine Mother to his soul's identification with Her, like a follower of Chaitanya. He regarded himself as an eternal child of Divine Mother and cultivated Her presence. He lived in Her kingdom as Her direct subject. A sweet blend of knowledge and devotion is found in his teachings. The *Devi Gita* is a part of the *Devi Bhagavata.* Its account of devotion borrowed from the *Bhagavata*,

KNOWLEDGE (JNANA)

Nescience (ajnana) is the cause of actions (karma) for the gratification of egoistic desires. It is the cause of works for self-gratification (pravrti). Unless nescience becomes attenuated, there cannot arise a desire for renunciation (nivrtti). Nescience is the cause of the knowledge of duality and difference. True knowledge is the cause of knowledge of nondifference or identity (abheda). Nescience or ignorance of the true nature of the individual self as an eternal spirit - a child of the Divine Mother - is destroyed by the true knowledge of it. Nescience of the true nature of |he world as an expression and play of the Divine Mother or power of 'I' -consciousness (vimarsa) and creative delight is destroyed by the true knowledge of it. Sense-control, mind-control, endurance, withdrawal of mind and sense-organs from their objects, detachment from earthly and heavenly happiness, and desire for emancipation are the prerequisites for the acquisition of the saving knowledge. The merits acquired by the performance *of* righteous actions in many past births produce a desire for liberation. Knowledge cannot be acquired without resorting to a competent Master (guru) and arduous spiritual discipline under his close guidance. Knowledge of the Supreme Reality is hidden in an embodied soul, and can be brought out by continuous concentration of mind and meditation. Human birth is unavailing without acquiring the saving knowledge. (DG., vi, 33-45, pp. 200-01.)

Seven stages in the acquisition of the saving knowledge are described in the following manner. (1) At first, an aspirant keeps

the company of saints, hears the Sastras, and practises detachment (vairagya) from the objects of enjoyment. These acts produce a desire for liberation in him. He should discard enjoyment (pravrtti) and adopt renunciation (nivrtti). Then he should cultivate reflection (vic5rana) on truth and untruth, the eternal and the non-eternal, the real and the unreal. (3) Then he should sedulously practise the subsidiary means to the acquisition of true knowledge (sangabhavana). (4) Then be should dissolve all the subtle subconscious impressions of emotions, desires and actions (vasana-vilaya). (5) Then he attains embodied release (jivanmukti), experiences pure consciousness; and bliss (suddha-samvid-ananda), and attains a state which it half-conscious and half-asleep. (6) Then he attains a state of superconsciousness (asamvedana); what is called unconscicus trance (asamprajnata samadhi) is really super-conscious trance. It is a state of condensed bliss only resembling deep sleep. It is the fourth state (turiya) of perfect statelessness or liberation. (7) Then he attains the last super-ecstatic state (turiyatita) called supreme nirvana which is completely devoid of object-consciousness. The first three states are waking states. The fourth state is called dream wherein the world appears to be like a dream. The fifth state is called deep sleep since it is in the nature of condensed bliss. The sixth state is called ectasy (turiya) or the fourth state in the nature of superconsciousness. The seventh state is called the super-ecstatic (turiyatita) state. It is ineffable, incomprehensible, self-manifest being. (APU., V, 81-89, p. 507.) The fourth state (turiya, turya) is devoid of the sense of 'I 'or not-I,' being or non-being, desire and volition, individual nescience (avidya) and cosmic nescience (maya), inequality and unrest, egoism (ahamkara) and attachment (asakti), waking state, dream, and deep sleep. It a state of tranquility, equanimity, equality, silence, transparcnce,fulfilment, renunciation, and perfect bliss. It is a state of doing all works with complete renunciation of all objects. It is a state of destruction of mind and ego. The existence of mind is the cause of intense suffering. The extinction of mind, or desire and attachment, is

the cause of supreme delight. Hence the mind should be merged and dissolved in the ether of pure consciousness (chidakasa) with its desire and attachment. (APU., v, 107-17, pp. 508-09).

There are five kinds of errors (brahma). (1) The knowledge of the individual self (jiva) and God (iSvara) as different from each other is the first error. (2) The knowledge of the activity of the individual self as real is the second error. (3) The knowledge of the individual self united with the causal body, the subtle body, and the gross body as attached or nondetached (sangin) is the third error. (4) The knowledge of the cause of the world as modified into the world is the fourth error. (5) The knowledge of the world as different from its cause as real is the fifth error. (1) The first error is annulled by knowing that Brahman reflected in nescience (avidya) or the internal organ is the individual self. (2) The second errer is annulled by knowing that activity of intellect (buddhi) or egoism (abamkara) is falsely attributed to the individual self as redness of a flower is falsely ascribed to a transparent crystal. (3) The third error is annulled by knowing that the individual self is detached from its causal body, subtle body, and gross body, even as ether (akasa) is detached from a temple and a jar in which it is enclosed. (4) The fourth error is cancelled by knowing that the world is really nondifferent from Brahman, just as a gold ornament is really nondifferent from gold. When these errors are completely destroyed, the mind is merged and dissolved in Brahman, and identified with the ether of pure consciousness. (APU., i, 1-16, pp. 493-94.)

Mere scriptural knowledge is not able to destroy the delusion of embodied life in the cycle of births and deaths. Darkness cannot be removed by mere talk of a lighted lamp. (KNT., 1, 97)1 As darkness is removed by light, so the primal nescience (avidya) which generates bondage, is destroyed by the intuitive knowledge (prajna) of the identity of the essence of the finite self with Divine Spirit. It is not destroyed by verbal knowledge.

Scriptural knowledge is verbal knowledge. The *Kamakkya* Tantra says, 'Knowledge gives wealth, happiness,virtue, and liberation. Knowledge is the supreme means of realizing Divine Spirit. It is the fruit of penance' (3-4). (TT., p. 347.) The *Mahanirvana Tantra* says, 'True knowledge is the intuitive experience of the truth: 'I am Brahman', One who experiences that one's self, though dwelling in a body, is bodiless and Supreme Atman, the ubiquitous, perfect, non-dual, transcendent Witness (saksin) is liberated from bondage. (MNT., xiv, 21-22). The knowledge of the Brahman is the supreme knowledge. One in whose mind this knowledge is permanently established does not require the performance of Japa, moral observances, vows, and austerities, the offering of oblations to sacrificial fires, the worship of Goddess, concentration of mind on Her, and meditation on Her. One who intuits that all is Brahman has transcended merits and demerits, acquired absolute purity, and realized the identity of the meditating self and the Supreme Self meditated on. Such a person has no more rebirth and does not go to heaven. His self is not bound but free and liberated, and not tainted by all objects and events in the world. A person is liberated by realizing the Supreme Self, Atman, in his finite self. The Atman is the dearest of all; none other is dearer than the Atman. (Ibid., xiv, 30-32, 42-43.)

The intuitive experience of Brahman as the true being of the finite self is the highest state. Meditation on Brahman is inferior to it. Chanting hymna of the Divine and muttering the holy name are inferrior to it. The external worship of a Deity is inferior to it. It is the lowest kind of worship. Yoga consists in the union of a finite self with Supreme Self. Worship is the union of a devotee and a Deity. The knower of all as Brahman needs neither yoga nor worship. Muttering a Holy Name, oblations to a sacrificial fire, moral observances, vows, penances and the like are useless for one who has intuitively experienced all beings as Brahman, Truth-Knowledge-Bliss. Such a person has become

identicalwith Brahman.Worship, meditation and fixation of the mind on vital parts of the body are needless for him. His soul is always liberated, untainted by all objects, and is not entangled in bondage. He who has realized Brahman in all entities is not affected by merits and demerits, because he has destroyed them, and acquired transcendent purity. He has transcended rebirth, heaven, and duality of meditator and meditated objects. A person who has intuited Brahman or Atman in his finite self is liberated from bondage. The distinction among a knower, a known object, and knowledge is due to maya. They become one Atman to a person who has acquired the intuitiva experience of Brahman. Knowledge is Atman of the nature of consciousness; a known abject is Atman of the nature of consciousness; a knower also is Atman of the nature of consciousness. A realizer of Brahman knows this supreme truth. (MNT., 14; 28-33, 42, 44-48.)

The *Mahanirvana Tantra* says, 'The Atman, Supreme Self, is in the nature of infinite pure consciousness (chit); the known object also is the Atman full of pure consciousness; knowledge is the Atman in the nature of pure consciousness (chit). It appears to be threefold - knowledge, known and and knower - because of maya. One who knows this truth is a real knower of the Atman.' (MNT., 14; 42, 44-45.) This view appears to be pure monism. But, maya, according to Saktism, is a real entity (tattva) existing as latent in Sakti, Divine Energy, before creation, and manifested in an individual self or knower, its knowledge, and a ileal external object of knowledge. Individual selves, acts of knowledge, and known objects are real in their state of bondage.

This view of Saktism resembles the view of Pratyabhijna Saivism. A knower knows a knowable object, because both are full of consciousness. Siva is the infinite Knower. (PTTD., 127). The *Spandakarika* says, 'The infinite Knower shines in knowledge and knowable objects, being endowed with supreme power in waking consciousness. In trance Siva alone shines' (18).

The *Devi Gita* mentions the sixfold method of preparation

for the attainment of the saving knowledge of the Supreme Sakti as the essence of an individual self mentioned by Samkara. Sama is control of the mind (manas). Dama is control of the external sense-organs. Titiksa is endurance of dualities such as heat and cold, joy and grief and the like. Uparati is withdrawal of the sense-organs and manas from the external objects of pleasure. It corresponds to pratyahara of Patanjali. Nityanityaviveka is discrimination of the eternal from the non-eternal. Siva-Sakti is eternal. The mind-body-complex and the world are non-eternal, lhamutraphalabhogavairagya is detachment from the enjoyment of the fruits of righteous acts in this world and in heaven. These are propedeutic to the attainment of the intuitive experience of Siva-Sakti. (DC, 7, 40) The saving knowledge is the highest stage of devotion. The knowledge arises from the highest stage of detachment. Supreme devotion and supreme knowledge both arise from supreme detachment. (Ibid.,6, 28,.) The knowledge of the identity of an individual self with Siva-Sakti is innate in the former. When its nescience (ajhana) is destroyed by the intuitive knowledge of Siva-Sakti (jnana), the individual self knows the Brahman, and becomes the Brahman. When the nescience is destroyed by the knowledge, what is already possessed is acquired. (Ibid., 7; 32-33.) If a person who has acquired detachment from the objects of pleasure dies before attaining the saving knowledge, he is born in a pure well-to-do person's family, undergoes spiritual discipline, and then acquires the knowledge. A person acquires the saving knowledge after births. If a person does not make strenuous efforts in this birth, his birth as a man is useless. If he attains the desired knowledge, the purpose of his life is fulfilled. (Ibid., 7; 36-45.) Knowledge generates liberation. It is indubitable. (Ibid., 7, 31.) The Brahman is the non-dual Being-Consciousness-Bliss, according to the Advaita Vedantin. Siva-Sakti is the non-dual Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Power. Sakti is dynamic Divine Energy. Siva is static Absolute, Witness, Brahman. Siva-Sakti is Supreme Reality, according to Saktism.

MEDITATION ON NADA

Natanananda mentions meditation on Nada, subtle sound, in connection with Kundaliniyoga and explains the *Hamsopanisad* in this connection. Goraksanatha's (1200 A.D.) doctrine of quest for Nada explained by the present author in his book on his philosophy is not foreign to the later Upanisads. Saktism practised meditation on Nada explained by Natanananda in his commentary entitled *Cidavalli* on the *Kamakalavilasa* of Punyananda. The aocount of Natanananda is given here. When Hamsa, an individual self, is absorbed in Nada, the state of supertrance (turiyalita), mindlessness (unmani) or cessation of breathing as *Kamsa* ('ego is he') arises. (See Ajapa). Mindlessness is destruction of egoistic mind infected with nescience (avidya). Cessation of breathing means breathing as 'He is I or Self (So'ham) or *Om* arise. *Om* lis the Brahman or Siva. It is the abbreviation of 'So'ham. The H*amsopanisad* states ten kinds of sound heard in the course of meditation on Nada. The first is *Chini*. The second is *Chini-chini*. The third is bell-sound. The fourth is conchshell sound. The fifth is the sound of a stringed instrument. The sixth is the sound of cymbals. The seventh is the sound of a flute. (Cp., Krsna's flute). The eighth is the sound of a kettledrum. The ninth is the sound of a drum made of clay. The tenth is a sound of a thunder. One who has heard the first sound should meditate on the second and so on. When the ninth sound has been heard, one should meditate on the tenth sound. The mind is dissolved in that sound. When the mind is dissolved, the distinction ceases, and merits and demerits, seeds of births and deaths, are burnt. Then Sadasiva, omnipresent, self-lumnious, eternal, stainles. enlightened, pure and tranquil Light is manifested. (KKV., CV., 26-27.) Goraksanatha was a Mahayana Buddhist called *Siddha*, yet he borrowed his ideas of Siva-Sakti, evolution of the universe from Kundalini, Kundaliniyoga, and quest for Nada (nadanusandhana) from Hindu Saktism. Mahayana Buddhists and zen Buddhists are not unaware of esoteric centres in the human

body. Chrismas Humphry refors to the centres of mystic consciousness in *Concentration and Meditation.*

SUPREME REALITY

Some philosophers advocate non-dualism or monism; others advocate dualism. But the Saktas advocate neither monism nor dualism but Integral Unity transcending and embracing monism and dualism. (KNT., 1, 110; GT, p. 81.) The Reality is Siva-Sakti manifested in the cosmos of embodied souls and diverse objects, matter, life and mind, and harmonizing them in an integral unity. Siva-Sakti is immanent in and transcending the mainfold world and different souls. According to Samkara, One Brahman, infinite Being-Consciousness-Bliss is the ontological reality. Many finite selves and different objects are empirical, phenomenal, relative, realities. The Brahman is their ontological reality. They are, in their reality, the Brahman. They are false in this sense: their falsity is realized, when the Brahman is realized. According to the Samkhya, prakrti and finite selves (purusa) are ontologically real. The different objects, the modifications of prakrti, are experienced by the finite selves; the finite selves are experiencers of these objects. When the souls completely isolate themselves from prakrti and 'its modifications, and realize their real nature as spirits, the world ceases to influence them, and practically ceases to exist for them. According to Saktism, Siva-Sakti is the Supreme Dynamic Spirit unfolded and expressed in the manifold cosmos and embodied finite souls and harmonizing and unifying them in an integral unity. Siva-Sakti inspires the bound souls to undergo yogic discipline and realize their essential identity with the Divine. Saktism neither annuls the One in many nor the many in the One, but integrates them in a higher Unity. Saktism is not world-negating but world-affirming and yet world-transcending. It is the doctrine of transmuting the body-life-mind of an embodied soul into a spiritualized instrument of divine life. It harmonizes enjoyment with renunciation or non-attachment, association with

matter with detachment from matter, worldly life with spiritual life, or transcendent freedom or liberation.

GRACE OF DIVINE MOTHER

The Supreme Reality reveals Itself at Its will to an aspirant. It| cannot be comprehended by reasoning or thinking. (KNT., 9, 10.) Divine Spirit is incomprehensible by reasoning, ratiocination, discursive thinking. Siva reveals Himself at His will to an aspirant through His Grace. He bestows His Grace on a! finite self embodied in a physical organism at His choice. An earnest seeker receives Divine Light through spiritual illumination. Supreme Grace descends upon him, and his soul is sanctified, illumined and self-fulfilled through His Grace. No amount of intellectual reflection can lead to the immediate suprarational experience of Divine Spirit. Saktas, Saivas, and Vaisnavas equally believe in the Grace of the Divine. Divine Grace is a supreme fact of spiritual experience. Saivas and Saktas call it descent of Divine Power (Saktipata) on a finite soul.

BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

Righteons actions produce merits; unrighteous actions generate demerits. Demerits produce intense misery. Merits produce pleasure and happiness. Excessive merits lead to birth in heaven. Excessive demerits lead to birth in hell. Merits and demerits lead to a cycle of births, deaths and rebirths. Merits and demerits must be worn out by enjoyments and sufferings in numerous births, in different species, and in different spheres of life. Merits are golden chains; demerits are iron chains. Until both merits and demerits are completely destroyed, there can be no liberation from bondage. Complete destruction of both potencies of action generates the saving knowledge of the identity of a finite self with the Brahman. Without this knowledge liberation from bondage cannot be attained. The saving knowledge can be acquired by a purified soul devoid of tamas through disinterested performance of duties and meditation on Brahman based on the Truth. (MNT., 14, 11-18.)

A jiva bound by merits and demerits is bound. When both are destroyed, a finite soul is purified of sattva, rajas and tamas, and realizes its identity with the Brahman, Atman, Supreme Self. The Atman is in the nature of pure consciousness (cidrupa). Knower, knowledge, and the known vanish. The Atman is self-aware, in the nature of Being, Witness (saksin), devoid of matter and physical activity and growth, and without birth, childhood, youth, old age, and death. The world is constructed by the Atman with cosmic nescience (maya). A liberated soul transcends cosmic nescience, duality, and plurality, and realizes its reality as One Being-Consciousness-Bliss. (MNT.. 14; 19, 22, 34-45). The *Mahanirvana Tantra* gives an Advaita Vedanta view of liberation. But there is a differernce between the Sakta view and the Advaita Vedanta view. The *Niruttara Tantra* says, 'The intuitive knowledge of Sakti is produced after many births. The Reality is Siva-Sakti. Liberation is not attained without the intuitive experience of Sakti'. It is acquired by Kundalini yoga. (TT., p. 28.)

Egoism, the sense of 'mine', is bondage; egolessness is liberation. (KNT., 1, 111; GT, p. 64.) A finite self (jiva) is, in its essence, identical with Siva, Divine Spirit. But it cannot realize its essential divinity because of its false identification with its body, manas, buddhi, and ahamkara, modifications of its primal nescience, and wife, children, home, wealth and the like, that are not-self. Its bondage is due to its false conceit of 'mine' in the not-self. This false sense of 'mine' is destroyed by yogic discipline laid down in the Sakta Tantras. A finite self must transcend its bodily, vital, mental, and intellectual consciousness in order to realize its essential transcendental freedom and essential identity with divinity.

Detachment itself is liberation. (KNT., 1, 55. GT., p. 57.) A finite self is entangled in physical objects of enjoyment because of its primal nescience (avidya). Avidya generates egoism. Egoism produces attachment to sensible objects. When a finite

self is freed from avidya by undergoing yogic discipline, its egoism and attchment are destroyed and it becomes detached, is established in divine consciousness, realizes its essential identity with Divine Spirit, and is liberated. Detachment from the objects of enjoyment is a prerequisite for the realization of a finite self's essential identity with Divine Spirit. Yet the cult of Saktism does not advocate mortification of the body, crucifixion of the flesh, rigid asceticism.

The cult of Saktism inculcates union of enjoyment with union with Divine Spirit by yogic discipline. It aims at harmony of enjoyment with renunciation or detachment. Enjoyment is the experience of the objects of pleasure for the gratification of the vital needs of the body for its nourishment and development to make it a fit medium for yoga. It should be attended with detachment from them, mental detachment from them, destruction of craving for them. Enjoyment should be accompanied with conscious union with Divine Spirit, and participation in the infinite delight of Divinity. Enjoyment is transformed into conscious union with Divine Spirit. Sinfulness is transmuted into sinlessness. Worldly life of bondage is transformed into transcendent freedom or liberation in the cult of Saktism. (KNT., 2, 24.)

Embodied finite souls (jiva) are not tainted by merits and demerits, when they have experienced the Brahman, Supreme Self, in their hearts. (KNT., 9, 132. GT., p. 72.) Virtuous acts generate merits. Vicious acts produce demerits. The former are due to excess of sattva. The latter are due to excess of rajas and tamas. When yogins have transcended sattva, rajas, and tamas, primal springs of action, and have realized the essence of their finite selves to be Supreme Self, Divine Spirit, they are not tainted by merits and demerits. They become free from the gunas of prakrti in the language of the *Bhagavad Gita.*

A jiva is Siva; Siva is a jiva. A jiva free from impurities or pure is Siva. Siva bound by bonds is a jiva; a jiva freed

from bonds is Siva. (KNT., 9, 42, GT., p. 49.) According to Sakta Tantras, an individual self is identical in essence with Divine Spirit. When it is purified of its bonds or impurities, it realizes its identity with Siva. According to Pratyabhijna Saivism and Saktism both, Siva becomes an individual self by limiting Himself by contractors (kancuka) and liberates it by guiding it through the medium of a human teacher and training it in yogic discipline. Its bondage and liberation are playful acts of Siva. He is the ultimate cause of its bondage and liberatien. A yogin experiences the objects of enjoyment in the world for the good of persons, and not for the gratification of their sense-desires. He sports on earth bestowing his grace on all. (KNT, 9, 75, GT., p. 105.) He lives, moves, eats, drinks, and works in the world as an instrument of Divine Spirit for the good of humanity. The adepts in yogic discipline define yoga as the union of a jiva with Atmam. A jiva is an individual self embodied in a physical body with the sense-organs, manas, buddhi and ego-sense (ahamkara) due to primal nescience (avidya). Atman is the Supreme Self or Siva Atman or Siva. Himself becomes an individual self, when He limits Himself by five contractors (kancuka) or limiting adjuncts, The union of an individual self with Atman or Siva is effected by yogic discipline, Kundaliniyoga,

A yogin who is detached, free from association with persons, who has transcended the limiting adjunct of his self, viz., primal nescience (avidya), who has destroyed his potencies of actions (vasana), cognitional, emotional, and volitional dispositions, and heart-knots or irrational emotional complexes, and who is absorbed in meditation on the true nature of his self as an eternal part of Divine Spirit knows the Supreme Reality. The intuitive experience of Divine Spirit presupposes the destruction of primal ignorance of the self as Spirit, of merits and demerits, of the innate predispositions and acquired complexes, and of attachment to the objects of sense-pleasures. (KNT., 9, 39. GT., p. 103.)

SAKTAISM AND OTHER FORMS OF NONDUALISM OR MONISM

Saktism and monistic Saivism both advocate idealistic monism, and regard Siva-Sakti as the ultimate Reality, and the individual souls and the world as appearances which are not ultimately real. Saktism lays stress on Sakti, and regards Siva as Her static, impersonal, and unconditioned aspect of the nature of mere manifestation (prakasa) in Whose presence She creates, maintains and dissolves the world, and binds and liberates the individual souls, and inculcates the worship of Her for the attainment of liberation. Monistic Saivism lays stress on Siva as endowed with the powers of volition, knowledge, action, binding and liberating the individual souls, and inculcates the worship of Him for the attainment of liberation. Both regerd Siva and Sakti - the Absolute and Divine Power or Energy - as non-differet from each other, and enjoin the worship of both. Saivism enjoins the worship of Siva as primary while Saktism enjoins that of Sakti as primary. Both admit thirty-six principles (tattva), and regard higher knowledge (jnana) as the principal means of liberation.

Saktism and Samkara's monism agree in advocating idealistic monism, regarding the individual souls and the world as appearances of the Brahman, and emphasising higher knowledge as the principal means of liberation. But they differ in that the former admits the reality of Sakti while the latter does not admit it. Samkara admits maya and regards it as neither real nor unreal but indefinable and ontologically unreal. Saktism regards maya as a creation of Sakti. Both believe in cosmic nescience (maya) and individual nescience (avidya), - the former projecting the world of appearances (viksepa-Sakti) and the latter veiling the nature of the Brahman (avarna-Sakti). Samkara's concept of the Brahman is similar to the Sakta's concept of Siva as pure undifferentiated consciousness. Samkara rejects the Sakta's concept of Sakti.

Saktaism and Sabdika monism agree in holding that there

are four stages of speech (vak): (1) para, (2) pasyanti, (3) madhyama, and (4) vaikhari. The former regards Sabdabrahma as the creation of Divine Power (Sakti) while the latter regards it as the ultimate reality, and the individual souls and the world as its appearances. The former regards Divine Power as the cause of sounds (Sabda) and objects (artha) while the latter regards Sabdabrahma as the cause of objects (HIP., Vol I, pp. 866-67). Saivism also admits four kinds of speech mentioned above ("Bharatiya Sadhanar Dhara", - Gopinatha Kaviraja, Calcutta, 1965, pp. 180-85).

THE CONCEPT OF SAKTI IN VAISNAVISM

Jiva Gosvami, a great Vaisnava philosopher, propounds the doctrine of inconceivable identity-in-difference (achintya-bhedabheda), regards God (bhagavan) as devoid of homogeneous difference (sajatiyabheda), heterogeneous differerce (vijatiyabheda), and internal difference (svagatabheda), and yet considers the individual souls as His real jivasakti, and the world as the real modification of His unconscious maya Sakti, and regards them both as different and non-different from His essential powers (svarupasakti) of infinite being (sandhini). Consciousness (chit), and bliss (hladini) into which they cannot enter. His jivasakti is His marginal or intermediate power (tatasthasakti) of finite consciousness. His mayasakti is the inferior power of insentience and unciousness. They are His external powers (bahiranga-sakti), and remain outside His essential powers (antarangasakti). They are reconciled and harmonised in Him because of His in conceivable power (achityasakti). He is the abode of contradictory qualities and dissimilar powers. How it is possible without internal difference in God is incomprehensible. Jiva Gosvami inculcates the worship of Durga, Sri (Laksmi), etc., as essential powers (svarupasakti) of God (Krsna) as a subsidiary part of it, and regards devotion devoid of works and knowledge as the supreme means liberation. He regards Brahman as an incomplete manifestion of God, but not indeterminate and

unqualified as Samkara thinks. He regards the individual souls as spiritual monads (anu), which are eternal dissimilar parts of God, and matter as unconscious. Saktism regards the souls as unreal appearances of Siva-Sakti and matter as dormant, coiled, involved power of consciousness (chitsakti), Siva as inderminate, undifferentiated, pure, consciousness and Sakti as His power of 'I'-consciousness. Though Vaisnavism is quite different from Saktism, yet it admits the reality of the powers (Sakti) of God. (BS., 284, BHS.)

APPENDIX

SlVA-SAKTI

1. sivasaktimayam tattvam tattvajnanasya karanam. (KNT).
2. mahavidya mahamaya mahamedha mahasmrtih. (Chandi, i, 72).
3. devya maya tatam idam jagad atmasaktya. (Ibid., ii, 33.)
4. naham stri na pumam scaha na klivam sargasamksaye. (DB., Vol. I, p. 151).
5. tvadrupah purusah sarve madrupah sakalah striyah. (Tararahasya).
6. tava devi bhedah striyah samastah. (Chandi, ii, 6).
7. sivasaktimayo lokah. (KNT).
8. yatra samkridate nityam mayasaktih sanatani. (DB., Vol. I, p. 384).
9. jyotirupa hi sa devi sarvapraamsvavasthita. (DB.)
10. tattvarudhah sa bhagavan sivah paramakaranam. sivah sarvasya karteyam saktih karanam ucyate. (ST. KKV, CV, i. p. 8).
11. samvid eva param rupam upadhirahitam mama. (DC, 8, 44.)
12. jnanam atmaiva cidrupo jneyam atmaiva cinmayah. vijnata sarvam evatma yo janati sa atmavit. MNT., XIV, 21).
13. jnanam jneyam tatha jnata tritayarh bhati mayaya. (Ibid., xiv, 44).
14. bhavi caracarabljam sivarupavimarsanadassah. (KKV., 2).
15. sa sphuratta mahasatta desakalavisesim- saisa sarataya cokta hrdayam paramesthinah (Pratyabhijna, KKV., CV., 4).
16. varnah kala padam tattvam, mantro bhuvanam eva ca. ityadhyas akatm devesibhati tvayi cidatmani. (Ibid., 6).

17. sakara'pi nirakara mayaya bahurupiiil. (MNT).
18. Sivah pradhanah purusah saktisca parama Siva. Sivasaktyatmakam brahma yoginas tattvadarsinah. (MP).
19. cinmayaprameyasya niskalasyasaririnah- sadhakanam hitarthaya brahmano rupakalpana. (KNT, vi.)
20. tvam adya parama vidya sarvabhutesvavasthita. svatantra parama Saktih kaste vidhi-nisedhkah. (DB).

WORLD

1. svamayaracitarh visvam. (MNT., XIV).
2. brahmaditrnaparyantam mayaya kalpitarh jagat. (Ibid).
3. tasyah vilasitaih sarvam jagad etacaracaram. (AR. UK).

KUNDALINI

1. mahakundalinirupe saccidanandarupini. (DB., Vol. I, p. 288).
2. kundalini devyatmika madabhinna. (DG, iv, 33).
3. mule kundalisaktir vyapini. (DB., Vol. II, p. 439).
4. Saktim kundalinim suksmam jagaccaitanyarupinim.
5. prasuptabhujagakaramsardhatrivalayanvitam. (Bhavapradipa; TS., p. 63).
6. muladhare kundalini nama para saktih pratisthita. (Var. Up., V, 51)
7. mahakundalini sarvanusyuta brahmasamjnita. (AR., UK).
8. apyavyaktam pralapati yada sa kundali tada. (Prapancasara).
9. adhare sarvabhutanam sphuranti vidyudakrtih. kundalibhutasarpanam angasriyam upeyasi. (ST).

JIVA

1. hrdi sthane jivatmarupam jyotirupam anumatram vartate. (DBU., 93; p. 290).
2. muladhare sivasya jivarupasya sthanam pracaksate. (YSU., V, 5, p. 467).
3. rago vidya kala caiva niyatih kala eva ca. (DB., Vol. II p. 350).

4. tatha baddho bhavej jivah karmabhiscasubhaih subhaih. (MNT., xiv).
5. mayavrto hi jivastam paramam neksate mune. (DB).
6. mayavimohini pumsam ya samsarapravartika. tattvajnanatmika caiva sa samsaranivartika. (Ibid).
7. anadipursodyukta tadaamsa jivasamjnakah. jvaladagner yatha devi sphuranti visphulingakah. (Nirvana Tantra).

NADA, BINDU, KALA

1. akaradi ksakaranta matrka bijarupini. (KDT).
2. akaradi ksakaranta svayam paramakundali. (Ibid).
3. nadabindukalatita nadabindusvarupini. (DB).
4. nadah pranasca jivasca ghosascetyadi kathyate. (Prapancasara).

MANTRA, GURU, DEVATA

1. guror jatasca mantrasca mantraj jata tu devata. (Mundamala Tantra).
2. yatha devas tatha mantro yatha mantras tatha guruh. (KNT).
3. mantro'pi gurur ucyate. gurur ekah sivah proktah. (Rudra yamala).
4. diksnmulam japam sarvam diksamulam param tapah.
5. devata mantrarupini (KNT).
6. yantrarh mantramayam proktam. (Ibid).

BONDAGE AND RELEASE

1. brahmaivaham iti jnatva mukto bhavati dehabhrt. (MNT., xiv, 21).
2. yogo jivatmano raikyam pujanam Sevakesaysh. sarvam brahmeti viduso na yogo na ca pujanam. (Ibid., xiv, 29).
3. sarhsarabandhahetusca saiva sarvesvaresvari. (Chandi).
4. sa vidya parama mukter hetubhuta sanatani. (Ibid).
5. atmanatmanam ajnaya mukto bhavati manavah. (MNT xiv).
6. tarn jnatva paramam brahma jivanmukto vabhuva ha. (DB).